Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

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Editor's Note: The President was in Beckley, WV, on July 16, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, July 16, 2004

Remarks in Lancaster, Pennsylvania

July 9, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for having me. Please be seated, unless, of course, you don't have a seat. [*Laughter*] What a spectacular drive in here. As you know, we're on a bus, and it's hard to park a bus in a small parking lot, by the way. [*Laughter*] But we drove through this beautiful countryside and saw thousands of your fellow citizens there. They were so warm and gracious in their hospitality. I'm sorry they're all not here so I can thank them in person. Hopefully, somebody is recording this on a TV camera so they'll hear my thanks. But it is a really—what a special part of the world. And thanks for having me.

I'm here to talk about the fact that I'd like to be reelected President for a reason. You know, I love holding the office. It's—got a nice airplane to fly on and—[*laughter*]—housing is good. [*Laughter*] But I want to serve for 4 more years because I want the country to be safer, stronger, and better. I have a reason to ask for your vote.

And I'm going to spend a lot of time in Pennsylvania because I want to carry Pennsylvania this time. It's an important State. And we're going to—and we're going to.

I'm sorry that Laura is not with me. She's a fabulous First Lady, a great wife, and a wonderful mother—of my daughter, Jenna, who is traveling with me today, University of Texas grad. How about that—in 4 years. [*Laughter*] Laura sends her best. She's campaigning herself. She is a—she's come to realize what I know in that you can make a difference in people's lives in so many different ways in the positions that we're honored to hold.

I remember the time she gave the Afghan radio address—radio address, my radio address, and talked about women in Afghanistan. And it was such a comforting and reassuring voice, I'm sure, for the women there who had been so brutalized by the Taliban to hear the First Lady speak. But the feedback from the radio address was really good. And she—I remember her coming back upstairs in the White House and saying, "Gosh, they heard me." People heard that somebody in America cares for them, that when we talk about young girls in America and our desire for them to be able to realize their dreams, we also said the same thing about young girls in Afghanistan. And that message resonated. And Laura was the messenger, and it made such a difference to those ladies and women in Afghanistan who heard her voice that it, in return, made a great difference for her. She knows what I know: One, it's a honor to serve our country; and secondly, you have an opportunity to affect people's lives in a positive way. And that's exactly what she's doing.

I want to thank Joe Pitts for introducing me. Joe is a good, strong, solid United States Congressman with a lot of integrity and a lot of decency, and I'm proud to serve with him. I just want to thank you, Joe, very much.

I'm traveling with the United States senior Senator Arlen Specter. I'm proud to be traveling with him. I hope he wins, and I'd like you to support him. We discarded Santorum somewhere up the road. [*Laughter*] Actually, he's off to York to greet us there, which is our next stop.

I want to thank very much members of the statehouse who are here, particularly State Senator Noah Wenger. I'm honored you're here, senator. Thank you for coming. I also want to thank—thanks for being here. State Senator Charlie Dent, who has tossed his hat in the ring for the United States Congress, is traveling today, as is congressional candidate Scott Paterno. Thank you for coming, Scott, appreciate you being here.

I know we've got some grassroots activists who are here. Those are the people who are actually going to turn out the vote and do all the work. My job is to set the vision and

explain to people what I want to do for 4 more years. And the grassroots activists' jobs are to find those who are willing to vote. I think there's a lot of potential voters here, at least it seems like it. There was a lot of signs on the road—[*laughter*]—a lot of friendly waves. So I hope you garner them up and remind them that we all have a duty to do in a democracy and get them to the polls, turn them out, register people. We've got a web site, georgewbush.com, which is a place where you can sign up and get some marching orders and gives you something to do if you're interested in helping in the campaign.

I spend a lot of time thanking people who are campaigning on our behalf because I know it's hard work and it takes time out of your busy lives. And so the first thing I want to do is, for those who are willing to help Dick Cheney and me, I want to thank you very much for what you're doing. It makes a difference. And I'm confident—I'm confident our work will pay off come November 2d of this year.

You're probably wondering why would you—I mean, I imagine we could have drawn thousands of people. As a matter of fact, tonight in York, we are going to have a giant crowd. But why would you forgo a big crowd to come to this entrepreneurial haven to talk about the issues confronting the country? And the answer is, is because this is a perfect example of what I try to talk about when it comes to the economy. That's why I'm here. I'm here because our country's economy is strong, because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. And the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in this company, see. This is a small business that succeeds because the owners and the fellow workers work hard to make it succeed. It doesn't succeed because of business—I mean Government. It succeeds because of the business acumen of the people running this enterprise.

And so I want to thank very much the Lapp family for their hospitality. I am honored that you would host me today. It's not easy to host people called President. [*Laughter*] It's just about—5 buses, 4 vans, 200 policemen, and here we are. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Greg and Tim. Those are the Lapp boys. They bought the business from their dad, who is with us as well, and Mom. Thank you all for being here. It was a wise decision. There's nothing wrong with a couple of brothers following in a father's footsteps. [*Laughter*]

I told you one of the things I'm running for is to make the country stronger. A strong country really starts with having a country which economy is healthy. That's a strong country. If you got a strong economy, you've got a strong country. It means people are able to work.

We had a tough time for a while, because the country was in recession. That means it wasn't growing. It means it was going backwards. It means employees were wondering whether or not they were going to be working the next day. It means small-business owners are wondering whether or not they want to invest capital at all. In other words, you don't grow unless you invest capital. People were nervous during the recession.

Then we got attacked, and I'm going to talk a little bit about making America safer. But we got attacked on September the 11th. It hurt our economy. In other words, you're in a recession; then we have an attack. And the attack cost us a lot. It cost us dollars. It reminded us that the world has changed dramatically from the world that we thought we lived in. It was a tough moment in the history of this country. Yet it was a moment that we were able to overcome, because the great strength of America is the people of the country. They refused to be intimidated by terrorists. The entrepreneurs of our country, although set back some, still had that spirit within them, the desire to grow their businesses and to provide employment opportunities for people.

Then we discovered something else which hurt us, and that was that some of our citizens forgot to tell the truth, that they were given positions of responsibility and they weren't responsible citizens. And we uncovered corporate scandals. And we acted, by the way. Instead of wringing our hands trying to figure out what to do, we got together with the Congress, passed tough laws. The message is clear now that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America, that we expect responsible behavior for those who are in positions of responsibility.

And then another subject I'll talk about here in a minute: I made some tough decisions to defend the country, and we went to war. During a period of war, it's hard for the economy to grow because people don't feel confident. The concept of war is negative, not positive. I don't know if you remember, but we used to have on our TV screens "March to War." And if you're a small-business owner or a big-business owner, when you're thinking you're marching to war, there's a sense of uncertainty with that. People don't want to invest in an uncertain environment.

All these became hurdles for our economy. We overcame them. I'm confident one of the reasons we overcame them is because we cut the taxes on the people who work in America. We let people keep more of their own money. I say we overcame them—you'd expect me to say that; it's an election year. But others say it too. After all, the economy is strong right now. It's growing and getting stronger. Obviously, there's more to do, but it's growing. Listen, we added 1.5 million jobs since last August. That's a good sign.

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate is 5.1 percent. That's good news for people who are trying to find jobs. Obviously, the unemployment rate can go lower. We expect it to go lower because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. Manufacturing is up.

One of the great statistics in America is the fact that more people—the homeownership rate in the country is the highest ever. And that includes amongst minority citizens. I'll tell you why that's great. It's because when people own something, they have a vital stake in the future of the country. We want people owning things in America. The idea of somebody owning their own home is just a fantastic part of making sure the future of the country is a bright and hopeful future. I mean, I love the idea—think about people from all walks of life being able to say, "Welcome to my home. This is my piece of property. I own this." And today the homeownership rates are the highest they've been ever. And I know that's good for the homebuilders. It's also good for the homeowners. And that's a positive sign. In other words, times are good. But there's more we can do—there's more we can do.

Let me tell you one of the—some of the reasons I have made the decisions I made on the economy. And the best way to do it is to start with the Lapp boys. That's what I call them, at least. [*Laughter*] When you cut taxes, it means people have more money to spend. And first of all, principle one is that it's not the Government's money; it's your money to begin with. And the second principle is that when you have more of your own money to spend, you'll demand an additional good or a service. And when you do that, somebody has to produce the additional good or a service. That's the way the marketplace works. And when somebody produces the additional good or a service, it means somebody is likely to find a—keep a job, and as those additional—as demand expands, people are going to need to expand their businesses—in other words, hire more people—in order to meet the demand. That's how I think the economy works; others do as well. As a matter of fact, that's what the tax relief is showing us, that the economy works that way.

One of the key components of economic vitality is the small-business sector of America. Now, two points on this. One, most small businesses, just like Lapp Electrical, pay individual income tax rates. A lot of Americans don't know that. This company pays taxes at the individual income tax rate because they are what they call a Subchapter S corporation. Or many small businesses are what they call sole proprietorships; they, too, pay tax at the individual income tax rate. So when you hear me talk about cutting taxes, it is very important for people to connect that to small businesses. Most small businesses pay taxes at the individual income tax rate.

Secondly, most new jobs in America are created by small businesses. Therefore, it makes sense to put economic policy in place that stimulates the growth in the small-business sector. If you're interested in creating jobs, if you're interested in people being able to find work—and most new jobs are created by small businesses—it makes sense to have economic policy focus on small businesses. And that's exactly what our tax relief plan did.

Now, there was a debate in Washington as to who ought to get tax relief. My attitude

is everybody ought to get tax relief. If you're going to have any tax relief at all, the only fair thing to do is to give everybody tax relief. I really don't think you want a Government that's fixing to cut tax rates say, "Only these kind of people deserve it." That means politics is getting to decide. Our policy said, if you're paying taxes, all rates are reduced. And it's helped Lapp Electric, and that's important.

I'll tell you why it's important: Because they've added five workers since January. That's what I'm interested in. I'm interested in people working. And so I come into this business, and the two Lapp boys say to me, "I've added—we've added five workers. Your tax relief helped us. It enabled us to grow." And the definition of growth is five new workers working here. And that's good news—guess for who: the five people that are working.

Part of the tax relief plan also enabled people to have what they call bonus depreciation. In other words, it encourages people to make investment. And so one of the reasons I came is to try to connect investment to their decisionmaking to jobs. Greg and Tim told me they're going to invest $80,000 this year. Part of it is because they see a better tomorrow; part of it is because the Tax Code said, "If you do so, you'll get a little extra, a little extra help in the Tax Code." And they're going to buy new mezzanines, budget trucks, and service vans. That's called investment. In other words, they set aside $80,000, and they're going to do something with the 80,000.

Now, the way the economy works is that as they make a purchase with the 80,000, somebody has to manufacture or fix up or take care of the product they're buying—in this case, a mezzanine or a bucket truck or a service van. Somebody has to make that for them, which means somebody is going to work as a result of the investment. So when you hear people say investment equals jobs, that's what that means. They're making an investment. Somebody has to manufacture the product that they're purchasing, which means as the economy grows, more people are going to find work. And the tax relief we passed said to them, "If you make an investment, you get additional tax relief." That's how it works. That's why the tax relief we passed is so vitally important to economic vitality and growth.

Remember, they're a Subchapter S corp. This is important because there is talk in Washington about raising taxes.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Oh yes. I know. But that's just the way they think over there sometimes. [*Laughter*] In other words, when you hear them say, "Tax the rich in order to spend for—in order to pay for bigger spending programs," I want people to think about Lapp Electrical. They're talking about raising the top rates; they're taxing small businesses. The economy is strong. It's getting stronger. Now is not the time to be taxing small businesses in America. Now is not the time to be raising taxes at all.

Here's what Greg said about tax relief: "It helped us pull out of the lull quicker than we would have." That's positive, isn't it? In other words, they were in a lull. It's called recession. Actually, in his case, it was like neutral. "Now, we're so ridiculously busy," says Greg, "that we need to hire more people to get everything done." That's exciting news. There's a lot of Gregs all over America who are ridiculously busy that they see a better future, that they're confident, that they're willing to invest $80,000. See, things are getting better in America. The spirit is strong. The great entrepreneurial spirit of America is vibrant, and we intend to keep it that way.

With us as well is Tim King. Thanks for coming, Tim. Tim is sitting next to Jenna. He was a telecommunications technician, served in the United States Air Force, lost his job last year. That's hard when that happens. It's not easy, wondering what's going to go on. Fortunately, the economy is growing. Fortunately, things are such that Lapp Electric was willing to hire Tim. He's gainfully employed here. In other words, the tax relief not only encourages nice statistics, but here's a fellow here whose life that I can say to you directly has been improved. He said, "It's an excellent work atmosphere here. I have a larger variety of work to do." He's working here because the economy is getting better. I think he's working here because the tax relief we passed has made a difference in stimulating economic growth and vitality.

I appreciate you letting me use you as an example, and I'm glad you're back at work. I'm glad you're here.

There are about 900,000 small-business owners in Pennsylvania that enjoy a lower tax burden, thanks to the work we did. That's good news. Tax relief also has an effect on American families. A lot of times in Washington, we just—well, we seem to overlook what tax relief has meant for people. We talk about it. But what I like to do is let people's own stories carry the philosophy.

Tim and Dawn Martin are with us today from Lancaster. Thank you for coming. I see you've got your two lads. I appreciate you bringing them. As you can see, they're a young family—Nathaniel and Ian. Because of tax relief, the Martins saved $1,700 off their taxes last year. Now, I know for a lot of them there in Washington, 1,700 doesn't seem like much. Just ask the Martins what it feels like, though. That's what matters. It doesn't matter what people think in Washington. What matters is what these people think. It's their money. It's 1,700 more dollars in their pocket. Here's what he said. He said, "It makes us feel more comfortable." That's important. You know, confidence has a lot to do with whether an economy grows. When you're comfortable, you're confident or more likely to be confident. "We're able to put money aside for our children's future education."

One of the things the Martins know is that their most important duty, their most important responsibility as a mom or a dad, is to love their children with all their heart and all their soul. And I appreciate that spirit of prioritizing your children's education. The tax relief we passed enables them to do so. It makes a lot of sense.

By the way, part of the tax relief is the fact we raised—comes from the fact we raised the child credit to $1,000. Part of it happened because we created a new 10-percent bracket, and part of it happened because we're beginning to reduce the negative effects of what they call the marriage penalty. I've always been slightly perplexed by why do you have a Tax Code that penalizes marriage. I mean, it seems like one of the things that we ought to be doing in America is encouraging marriage, not penalizing marriage.

All those three tax relief packages are getting ready to expire. See, Congress passed it, but in order to make the numbers work, they said, "Well, some of it will expire." My attitude is that it ought not to expire because if it expires, it raises taxes on the people like the Martins. They're comfortable now. They're going to be not so comfortable when the Government gets back in their pocket for some of the money that they expect is coming their way. I'm calling on the Congress once again to make sure that these aspects, at the very minimum, these parts of the tax relief plan, remain permanent, that they don't go away, that they don't raise the taxes.

No, I'm upbeat about this economy of ours. But my job is not only to think about today, but it's to think about what life is going to look like 5 years from now or 10 years from now. We have an opportunity to do some things today to make sure that America is the most competitive place in the world to do business so that people can find work. Let me give you a couple of ideas right quick.

First of all, I'm concerned about what health care costs do to companies like Lapp Electrical. Premiums are going up. There's some smart things we can do. One, we have passed what's called health savings accounts, which will enable consumers to be able to save tax-free and have a better relationship—for your medical expenses—and better afford catastrophic care and which, by the way, will keep the link between patient and doctor intact.

There is a philosophical debate going on in Washington about who is the best decisionmaker for health care. A lot of them up there think that it's the Federal Government. Of course, I don't. I think it's the consumers. I think it's the people. I think it's the patients that should be empowered to make the decisions for what is best for them.

I believe in association health plans. This is kind of a fancy word for allowing small businesses to pool with other small businesses to be able to spread risk so that their premiums are lower for their employees. You can't do that today. The Federal Government needs to allow Lapp Electrical to team up with the equivalent in Texas so that there's purchasing power for small businesses. That

will enable the owners of this business to be able to have a more affordable health insurance for their employees.

Finally, I'll tell you, in order to make sure we've got reasonable health care costs, we've got to do something about the frivolous and junk lawsuits. Listen, we're too—there's too many lawsuits here that are running up the—these lawsuits—look, if you're hurt, you ought to have your day in court, no question about it. But lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit is running up the cost of medicine, and it's running doctors out of practice. You've got an acute problem here in Pennsylvania, as you know. I remember coming to your State and talking to doctors and hearing their stories about not being able to heal here. And they want to. They want to practice their trade. They want to help people. But they can't afford to stay.

When I first got to Washington, I looked carefully at this issue. As a former Governor, I thought it was a State issue, and then I realized how much it cost our Federal Government. The defensive practice of medicine costs the Federal Government billions because of—we're providing a lot of money for Medicare and Medicaid and veterans' health benefits. These junk lawsuits are costing the taxpayers once at the State level and another time at the Federal level. So I decided it was a Federal issue and, therefore, called upon a Federal—for a Federal solution.

We got it out of the House. Of course, it's stuck in the Senate—[*laughter*]—stuck in the Senate. A lot of the tort reform is stuck in the Senate. I don't think you can be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer. You've got to pick. I'm pro-small-business.

A couple of other points I want to make right quick. In order for the Lapp Electricals of the world to be able to grow or any other business in Pennsylvania to be able to grow, we've got to have a reasonable energy policy. I mean, people talk to me about the manufacturing sector a lot, and obviously I want manufacturing jobs to be—to stay here and for the manufacturing sector to grow, which it's now doing, by the way. But it's going to be hard for the country to maintain a manufacturing base if we don't have reliable supplies of energy. Imagine trying to run a manufacturing company with sophisticated equipment, and you're not certain whether or not the electricity you turn on is going to be available. Remember, we had a blackout, and it wasn't all that long ago. We need to modernize our electricity grids if we expect to stay competitive.

We're very dependent on foreign sources of oil and natural gas. It seems like to me it make sense to encourage conservation, to use research and development to find alternative sources of energy, but also to use the resources we have in an environmentally friendly way. Listen, we've got a lot of coal; we need to be burning coal. We've got the ability to find natural gas in our own continent. We can do so in an environmentally friendly way. For the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, this country must be wise about its energy policy and become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We have been working on this for a couple of years. It's stuck in the Senate. Well, actually it's stuck in conference—that's not fair. But the Congress needs to get together and get a bill to my desk. They just need to.

Trade is a big issue. I know people are concerned about trade. Here's the issue. Most Presidents prior to me agreed that we ought to open up U.S. markets for foreign goods. You know why? It's good for consumers. It's good for the American people. If you have more choice in products, you're bound to get better quality at better price. That's just the nature of the way the economy works. In other words, if there's more choice for consumers, prices will be better, as will quality.

The issue really has been whether or not other countries are opening up their markets like we have ours. That's the issue, as far as I'm concerned. And so my job is to say to China, "Open up your markets." My job is to say to Europe, "Open up your markets." And we're making progress. Just ask the farmers here in Pennsylvania what it's like in the farm economy today. You know why? We're selling a lot of farm product overseas. Look, we're good at something—we're good at growing things—we ought to be selling things everywhere around the world. My job is to say, "Open up your markets. If ours is open, yours needs to be open." Just give us

a chance to compete, and America can outcompete anybody, anytime, anywhere.

And so we've got to reject economic isolationism. It just doesn't make any sense for the future of this economy of ours. If we want people working in America, let's be confident. Let's just make sure the playing field is level, give our workers a chance. We've got the most productive workforce in the world. And a fair chance to compete means America wins, as far as I'm concerned.

Finally, this economy of ours is also a changing economy. I don't know if Tim found that or not, but there's different types of jobs that are now becoming available. And therefore, we better have the ability to train workers for the jobs which actually exist. A lot of times, we've got great, decent people willing to work, but they don't have the skillset necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

I'm thinking about, for example, when I was in North Carolina seeing textile workers—[*applause*]—there you go. Thank you, sir—[*laughter*]—seeing textile workers now working in the health care field because they got the training necessary to change skillset. And one place to make sure that that is effective, that we're able to have that job training effectively, is at the community college system.

Community colleges are available. They're affordable. And the best thing of all is they're flexible. In other words, when the health care system of a particular town says, "Gosh, I need nurses," the community college ought to say, "Let me—design the curriculum with me so I can train workers." One of the key components of whether or not we're going to be able to survive in the 21st century is whether we've got a workforce trained for the jobs of the 21st century. And that's a great challenge of our country. And we've got the assets in place to do it. I'm willing to put up money from the Federal level to see to it that the community college programs are vibrant and alive and active and well for training these good folks for the jobs which actually exist.

So here are some ideas as to how to make sure America is competitive, the best place in the world to do business, the best place where the entrepreneurial spirit can continue to flourish and be strong.

I also told you I want to be President again because I want to keep America safer. That's my solemn duty, is to protect the American people. It was a solemn duty that really became so evident on September the 11th, 2001. I mean, the enemy hit us in a way that was nearly impossible for anybody to dream that they would attack us, using our own airplanes to kill thousands of innocent people, a sudden attack. It says a couple of things about the nature of these people. They are coldblooded killers. They're not religious people. They've hijacked a great religion. They think they're religious, but they're not. Their hearts are filled with evil. They are—you can't negotiate with them. There is no peace treaty you can sign with these kind of people. They've got a dim vision of the world.

I resolved then that I will do whatever it takes to defend America. My duty is to do everything I can to protect our country. I called a good man into action named Ridge. You might remember him. His job is to see to it that the Homeland Security Department functions well, and he's doing a great job. And it's not easy—it's not easy. For the first-responders who are here—that would be your firefighters and your police and your EMS teams—I thank you for the job you're doing. We're all working together. We're on the frontlines.

We're communicating better. We're sharing information better. We've now got the FBI and the CIA sharing information. We've got divisions within the FBI sharing information. Before September the 11th, we couldn't have the criminal division and the intelligence division of the FBI even talking to each other about certain cases. No wonder information slipped through the net. That's why we passed what they call the PATRIOT Act.

So—by the way, let me say something about the PATRIOT Act. Nothing happens without court order. The same rules that we're using to catch drug lords is now—we're finally starting to apply to terrorists. It's essential that these tools stay in place if we expect to be safe.

Anyway, I decided then and there that I'd do everything to defend the country, so we

set up this Department of Homeland Security. But we've got to be 100 percent correct here at home; they've got to be right once. And therefore, the best way, really, to defend the country is to stay on the offensive, is to find these killers before they get here, is to use every asset we have, everything at our disposal to hunt down these evildoers and bring them to justice, which is exactly what I will continue to do as your President.

We're making progress. Two-thirds of the known Al Qaida leaders are—have been brought to justice, and we're slowly but surely, methodically, finding them and bringing them to justice. It's hard work, and we've got some really fine people working hard, really fine people. A lot of them wear the uniform of the United States military.

Politicians make a lot of promises, I know, and I've tried to do everything I can to meet them. One of the promises I did make is that help is on the way. When I—2000, Dick Cheney and I were campaigning, we used to go to see the military—go to a military base or talk to military families. Our pledge was, help is on the way. Help has happened. Our military is strong, vibrant, skilled. They're getting paid better, and they're getting housed better. They're getting all they need, and that's what they deserve.

Listen, I—as the Commander in Chief, I've got to be able to tell the husbands and wives and the moms and dads, we're doing everything we can, everything we can to make sure you've got what you need to help us do our duty, which is to protect America.

A second lesson in all this business is that when a President says something, he better mean it. In order to make the world more peaceful, the President must speak clearly and mean what he says. I said, "If you harbor a terrorist"—I said the first thing is we will find—we will stay on the offense and bring Al Qaida to justice. And then I said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist." In other words, I was sending a message to those who felt like that they could maybe give Al Qaida safe haven and maybe we would just ignore it. But that's not how you make sure America is secure. You not only have to deal with Al Qaida and their affiliates and friends, but you have to say to people, "Don't provide safe haven for them." In other words, you've got to keep them on the run.

As you might recall, the Taliban in Afghanistan were providing safe haven for these people. We gave them an ultimatum. They, of course, didn't believe it. And we went in. And we went in to not only eliminate the training bases and the safe havens for Al Qaida, to protect ourselves; we also went in to liberate the people of Afghanistan from the Taliban.

These people, as I mentioned to you earlier, are barbaric people. America weeps when they know that young girls are brutalized by a government. And that doesn't—that's not our value system. We care about human suffering. This is a compassionate country. And we also understand that when people are free, they're going to be peaceful.

And so we did a couple of things in Afghanistan. One, we liberated the people. Secondly, we got rid of Al Qaida safe havens. And thirdly, Afghanistan is now on the road to democracy, and Afghanistan is an ally and a friend in our task to make America more secure.

And then, as you know, I looked at intelligence and facts, and I came to the conclusion that Saddam Hussein was a threat to America. You see, because the other lesson of September the 11th is when we see a gathering threat, that we've got to deal with it—sooner, rather than later; that we can't hope that a gathering threat just goes away. That's the lesson of September the 11th.

And, therefore, I went to the United Nations and said, "Listen, I've looked at this intelligence, and it says he's a threat." I also, during my talk, reminded them that the guy had actually used weapons of mass destruction on his own people and that he had harbored terrorists. Abu Nidal is a terrorist. As you might recall, he killed an American. This guy Zarqawi got hospital aid there in Baghdad when Saddam Hussein was in power. He was the guy running a poisons factory in northeast Iraq. He's still in Iraq. He's the guy killing a lot of innocent people, ordering suiciders, bragging about it, cutting people's heads off. He's an Al Qaida affiliate. In other words, it was a safe haven. And the Congress looked at the very same intelligence I did, the exact same intelligence, and came to the

same conclusion: He's a threat. Interestingly enough, so did the United Nations.

Remember, I went to the United Nations and said, "We've got a problem here. As a matter of fact, it's such a problem that I think you probably have passed over a dozen resolutions saying he's a problem, and yet nothing has happened." And so I said, "Why don't we pass one and really mean what we say." And so with a 15-to-nothing vote, the United Nations Security Council did just that—15 to nothing—said, "He's a threat." "Disclose, destroy, or face serious consequences," is what the United Nations said, a collection of nations.

So we all felt the same thing back there. And of course, Saddam Hussein defied, and he just ignored what the free world had to say once again. Now, once you say something, you better mean it. At least that's the way I think. And we said "serious consequences." We meant serious consequences. I had a choice to make: Either trust this madman, who clearly hated America, who had—was fooling around with terrorists, who had used weapons of mass destruction and we had thought had weapons of mass destruction—take his word for it, or defend the country. Given the lessons of September the 11th, I chose to defend the country. And that's exactly what I would do again. America is a more secure place because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power.

The Senate is looking at intelligence failures, and should. We all ought to welcome an investigation about where we went right and wrong with our intelligence-gathering. You know why? Because it's important for a President and the Congress to get the best intelligence possible in this war against these terrorists. One of the key components of finding out who is going to hurt us is good intelligence. And there are a lot of really good people working in our intelligence-gathering, by the way—dedicated, solid, fine Americans. They too want the intelligence services to be as effective as possible. So I welcome their investigation. I really do.

And like Members of the Senate and the House, we thought there would be stockpiles of weapons. We haven't found them yet. We do know, however, and I just want you to remember this, that the man had the capacity to make weapons. He had the ability to make weapons. He had the intent and the capability, which is why I say I would have done it again, because he's a dangerous person.

The work is hard in Iraq right now. It's really hard because we're trying to take people from a society run by a tyrant to a free society. We've done this kind of work before, though. I want our fellow citizens to remember that. After World War II, we helped to rebuild Germany and Japan. And that wasn't easy. If you go back and look at the history, you'll find that there was articles written about how the reconstruction effort wasn't properly planned, why the societies were still violent, how maybe Japan couldn't conceivably self-govern because of its past history. There were a lot of skeptics and pessimists about the ability of liberty to have a transforming effect on societies. And I can understand that. It's hard work.

But fortunately, my predecessors didn't listen to the skeptics. And today, I'm able to sit down with the Prime Minister of Japan and discuss key issues like North Korea. In other words, a former enemy—former enemies sit at a table together and say, "How can we work to keep the peace," because there were people that preceded me that had great faith in the ability of freedom to change societies.

The Iraqi people want to be free. We've got a good leader there named Alawi. He's a tough guy. He's a strong guy. He's dedicated to a pluralistic, self-governing society. He's courageous enough to get them there. He just needs America to stand by his side. The terrorists have got—they've got an advantage over us: They don't have hearts, and we do. They kill in the hope that we—our hearts will be so full with sorrow, like they are every time, that we'll forget our promise and that we'll leave. We're not leaving. We will stand.

Let me tell you an interesting story. I'm probably going on—am I going on too long? [*Laughter*] Either Laura or Jenna will give me the hook. [*Laughter*] Let me tell you an interesting story. They said that they've got some people from Iraq coming to see you. The door opens up in the Oval Office—which, by the way, is a fantastic place. It's a shrine to democracy. It's a powerful office.

Just being in there is such an honor. And in walk seven people who have had their right hands cut off by Saddam Hussein. These were small-business guys. And not only did they have their right hands cut off, they had X's carved on their foreheads by the Hussein henchmen. The currency of the country had devalued, and he needed a scapegoat, so he found seven small merchants to blame the currency devaluation on and punished them by cutting off their right hands.

I asked one guy, "Well, why you?" He said, well, he was a jeweler, and he sold dinars to buy—I think it was either dollars or euros so he could get gold to use as a product for his jewelry. And they round him up—of course, no jury, no press looking after human rights, nothing.

He cut off seven hands off. Interestingly enough, a documentary was made of these seven guys, and the documentary was seen by a Houston newsman named Marvin Zindler. He is the—I don't know if you ever saw "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," the play. He's the guy, the newsman, that discovered this place in central Texas—anyway, famous in Texas, at least. [*Laughter*] But he started a foundation years ago to help people. And he saw the story, and he flew them over.

And so these seven guys walk in with new hands as well, because in Houston they had been outfitted because of the compassion of this American. In other words, what a contrast, isn't it, the brutality of a tyrant and the compassion of an individual citizen.

And they came in, and one guy took his new hand—they're just learning to use their hands—and he wrote "God Bless America" in Arabic. I nearly broke out in tears right there, it was such an emotional—I said, "Welcome to the Oval Office." I said, "I'm glad you're here." I said, "You don't have to worry about America. When we say we're going to do something, we'll do it, and we will stand with you so your children can grow up in a free society, which will make us more secure."

See, a free Iraq, free societies in the Middle East are in the long-term interest of America. In the short term, we get after them with every asset we got. In the long term, we defeat terror and darkness with the light of democracy and freedom. That's what we believe. Look what happened in Japan and Germany. And I'm telling you, it can happen.

Anyway, I told these guys, I said, "It's good you're in the Oval Office because I want to tell you something about our society. The office of the President is bigger than the person. This is a great place to meet because it's a chance to remind you that in your new country, when you've survive, the institutions you put in place will be bigger than the people, and therefore, your society will be stable, and you're more likely to be free."

Now, finally, I want your vote because I want to make America a better place—a better place. There's a lot of ways we can do so. I want to make sure the education system works well. I'm telling you, the No Child Left Behind Act is a good piece of legislation. We spent more money than we ever have at the Federal level. At the same time, we said we trust local people to make decisions for their schools, and we did something else that I thought was very wise. We said, "Show us the results." For too often we'd just spend money and hope for the best, and guess what would happen? Kids whose parents didn't speak English as a first language just get shuffled through the system—the hard-to-educate, inner-city kids—"Just move them through. Maybe they'll learn; maybe they won't." That's not good enough for the 21st century, and it's certainly not good enough for me.

And so we've raised the bar. And we said, "You're going to get more money, but now you're going to devise accountability tests to show us whether the kids can learn," to read, for example. We want every child reading at grade level by the third grade. That's what we want, right? Seems like a reasonable national goal to me. That's not too hard to ask in America, to say, "How about just reading at the 3d grade level? And if you don't, there will be remedial help, and the parents will get more choice." In other words, there needs to be accountability.

And it's working. We've raised the bar. We're saying, "Show us whether or not the kids can read and write and add and subtract." We're paying for curriculum that works. Listen, some reading programs work;

some of them don't. You know what I'm talking about. And the best way to determine whether yours does is to measure. And that's what we're doing with local control of schools. See, we called it the No Child Left Behind Act. That's exactly what I mean. I don't want any children left behind in America. I want everybody to be able to realize their full potential. And so a better America is going to come when our public schools get better, and they are. They are.

Another way to make sure America is a better place is to surround people with love. The Government is not a loving organization, however. [*Laughter*] Government is law and justice. Love comes from the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. Love is found in our churches and mosques and synagogues. Love is found in those kind of daily acts of kindness that take place all the time not because of governmental law, because—many times because of a higher law. And it happens in America every single day. The strength of this country is the hearts and souls of the American people, and a President must understand that.

And so we started what I call the Community and Faith-Based Initiative, which says we're going to open up Federal monies to applications for grants from faith-based organizations. I mean, if you want somebody to quit drinking, sometimes you have to change his heart and therefore change his behavior. Not every time—it doesn't have to happen every time. But a lot of times, if you change a person's heart, good chance they're going to change their behavior. And faith-based organizations are pretty good at changing hearts. That's why they exist, isn't it? And so Government must be willing to allow faith-based programs to access Federal money without causing the faith-based program to change their mission. How can you practice to be a faith-based program if you cannot practice your faith?

And so what I'm telling you is, is that part of a changing and better America is for Government to understand—or for the person, for the President to understand the true strength of the country and be willing to rally that strength. We're going to change America one heart at a time, one soul at a time, because the American people are so loving and so caring and so decent. And one of my jobs is to call upon that decency and to rally the armies of compassion.

Listen, I am honored that you came out and given me a chance to share with you my vision for a safer, stronger, better America. I'm here asking for the vote. I'm working for the vote, because I have something to do. I've got a reason to serve. There are things I want to do to make this country the greatest country it can possibly be. It's a honor to serve America. Thank you for coming, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. in the warehouse at Lapp Electrical Service, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Charles W. Dent and Scott Paterno, candidates for Pennsylvania's 15th and 17th Congressional Districts, respectively; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal, who was found dead in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 19, 2002; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi Interim Government. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks in York, Pennsylvania

July 9, 2004

The President. Thank you all. I'm honored you're here. We've had a fantastic day in the great State of Pennsylvania. See my little bus there? We've been traveling the backroads of this great State. It's so beautiful. All kinds of people came out to say hello. And what a great place to end a great trip, in York, Pennsylvania. Thanks for coming.

You probably know this, but for 9 months in 1777 and 1778, York was the capital of the United States. Today, York is the capital of Bush-Cheney country.

I want to thank all my fellow Republicans. I want to thank the discerning Democrats and wise independents who are here today. I'm proud you're here. I'm here to let you know that I have the desire, the drive, and the vision to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I'm back in this important State to ask for the vote. And I'm here in

this crowd to ask for your help. Register your friends and neighbors. Work those phones. Put up the signs. If you want to help, go onto georgewbush.com on the Internet. You can find out how to sign up to help. I'm counting on you. And together we will win a great victory in Pennsylvania and a great victory across this Nation on November the 2d.

You know how many people running for President would love to have Joe Paterno introduce him in Pennsylvania? Everybody who has ever run for President wants Joe Paterno to introduce him. [*Laughter*] But in the year 2004, there's only one, and I'm honored it's me. I want to thank you, Joe. Thank you very much for being here. I'm proud of the example you set. You're a fine, fine, fine American. And you raised a fine son in Scott. We need to send him to the United States Congress—Scott Paterno.

I regret that Laura is not here. I'm going to give you all kinds of reasons to send me back to Washington today, but probably the most important one is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. I'm really proud of her. She's a fantastic, fantastic woman. I love her dearly. We talked to her on the phone on the bus; she sent her best. And in her stead, traveling with me today is a new graduate from the University of Texas, one of my great daughters, Jenna Bush. Made it through in 4 years, I want you to know.

Proud to be here on stage and traveling today with a fine United States Senator, Senator Rick Santorum. What a fine job Congressman Todd Platts is doing for the people of this area. Where's your mother? There's Mom, right there. She made me some fudge. [*Laughter*] I'm going to run all day—well, I'm going to bike all day tomorrow. [*Laughter*] Thanks for the fudge; I actually had some.

I appreciate Jerry Pappert, the attorney general from the great State of Pennsylvania, who joined us today. Thanks for coming, General. State Senator Jeff Piccola is with us. I know other members of the statehouse are here. Thank you all for coming. I'm proud you're here. Turn out the vote. Make sure you spend enough time in your district to get the vote out.

I want to thank State Senator Charlie Dent. He's running for the Congress up the road here. He's going to make a fine United States Congressman. Charlie, thanks for coming. I know we've got other candidates here, and I want to thank you for running.

I appreciate my friend Alan Novak, the chairman of the Pennsylvania Republican Party. He's representing the grassroots activists who are here. A grassroots activist is somebody who is getting ready to turn out the vote. And for those of you who are going to do that, thanks a lot. It really means a lot. It's important. The stakes are high in this election. Just like you're counting on me, I'm counting on you.

I love the Oak Ridge Boys. Every time I see them, they say, "We're your friend. You can count on us." And sure enough, every time I've counted on them, they have been there. I am honored to have you here. Thanks for coming. I want to thank the Matt Goss Band as well. Thank you for coming.

Ethel Berdall is with us. She is 101 years young. Hi, Ethel. I'm proud to have your support. Thanks for coming.

The last 3½ years have brought serious challenges. We have given serious answers. We came to office with a stock market in decline and an economy headed into a recession. But we acted. We led. We delivered historic tax relief, and over the past 3 years, America has had the fastest growing economy in the industrialized world.

There were corporate crimes in America recently, people who forgot what it means to be a responsible citizen. We acted. We passed tough corporate reforms. We're bringing wrongdoers to account. It is now clear that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning. We acted. I have led. We pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We have captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network. We will stay on the hunt until justice is served and America is safe from attack.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We acted against two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We have liberated over 50 million

people. America is safer because of our actions. The world is better off. America is once again proud to lead the armies of liberation.

When the Vice President—and oh, am I running with a fine man in Dick Cheney—when he and I came to Washington, the military—remember back 3½ years ago—the military was underfunded and underappreciated. We gave our Armed Forces the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no friend or foe can question the skill, the strength, and the spirit of the United States military.

It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. It is the President's job to make hard decisions, to keep his commitments. That is how I have led our country, and that is how I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years.

I'm ready for the contest. I'm ready for the contest. I'm looking forward to it. It's going to be a tough race, make no mistake about it. That's why I'm traveling stop to stop on this great bus. I take nothing for granted. After all, I'm running against an experienced United States Senator from Massachusetts.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's been there a long, long time. He's been there long enough to take both sides on just about every issue. He voted for the PATRIOT Act, for NAFTA, for the No Child Left Behind Act, and for the use of force in Iraq. Now he opposes the PATRIOT Act, NAFTA, the No Child Left Behind Act, and the liberation of Iraq. If you disagree with the Senator from Massachusetts on most any issue, you may just have caught him on the wrong day. [*Laughter*]

And now, just last weekend, he even tried to claim he was the candidate with conservative values. [*Laughter*] I know—I know, but I'm quoting his own words. Believe it or not, that's what he said. [*Laughter*] It's hard to square that statement with his previous statement when he said, "I'm a liberal and proud of it." On issue after issue, from funding our troops who are on the battlefield, to involving parents in important decisions of their minor daughters, to supporting faith-based and community organizations that are helping those in need, the Senator is out of step with the mainstream values that are so important to our country.

My opponent now has a runningmate. I look forward to a spirited debate. Senator Kerry is rated as the most liberal member of the Senate, and he chose a fellow lawyer who is the fourth most liberal member of the Senate. Back in Massachusetts, that's what they call balancing the ticket. [*Laughter*]

Great events will turn on this election. The person who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. I have a clear vision to win the war on terror and to extend peace and freedom throughout the world. I'm asking for your vote because I have a plan and a strategy to create more jobs, so every single citizen has a chance to realize the great promise of America. I'm seeking the vote to rally the compassionate spirit of this country so every citizen can realize their full, God-given potential. I will be clear on where I stand, and I'll be certain about where I'm going to take this Nation. When America gives me 4 more years, America will be safer, stronger, and better.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. A big issue for every family in America is the tax burden. By providing the largest Federal tax relief since Ronald Reagan was the President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and helping create new jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Federal Government could have.

Our economy is strong, and it is growing stronger. Since last summer, our economy is outpacing the entire world by growing at its fastest rate in nearly 20 years. In less than a year's time, we've added more than 1.5 million new jobs. In this State, in the great State of Pennsylvania, you've added 44,000 new jobs since February. The unemployment rate in this State is at 5.1 percent, below the national average. Across the country, the manufacturing sector is growing stronger. Homeownership rate is at an alltime high. Interest rates are low. Business investment is growing. Consumer confidence is at a 2-year high.

Personal incomes are on the rise. The economy is moving into high gear. The tax relief we passed is working.

My opponents look at all this progress and somehow conclude the sky is falling. But whether their mission is—whether their message is delivered with a frown or a smile, it's the same old pessimism. And to cheer us up, they propose higher taxes, more Federal spending, and economic isolationism. That's the surest way to end economic growth and to put Americans out of work. This Nation is on the path of progress, and we're not turning back.

To sustain economic growth, we need to keep your taxes low. Higher taxes right now would undermine growth and destroy jobs. To help grow the American economy and create more jobs for American workers, I have a better idea. Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent and not raise taxes on the American people. To make sure this economy continues to grow, we've got to be wise about how we spend the money you send to Washington. That's why we need discipline, spending discipline, in Washington, DC. And spending discipline starts with understanding whose money we spend. We're not spending the Governor's—Government's money in Washington, DC; we're spending the people's money in Washington, DC.

I not only want us to grow next year, but I want us to keep growing in the out-years. So I've got a plan to do so. First, we've got to stop these frivolous and junk lawsuits. You cannot be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent has made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. I have made my choice. I will continue to push Congress to reform tort laws and end frivolous and junk lawsuits.

And that includes medical liability reform. Small businesses make it difficult—it's very difficult for small businesses to hire new people because their health care premiums are going up. And one of the reasons why is because there's too many junk lawsuits suing the docs around this country and in this State.

We need energy legislation, commonsense energy legislation, if we want our economy to continue to grow. A couple of years ago, I submitted a plan to the United States Congress that encourages conservation, that modernizes our electricity grid, but also says that we need to use the resources we have at hand in environmentally friendly ways. We need to be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We need to be opening up markets for Pennsylvania entrepreneurs and farmers and ranchers. Listen, I know we've got some farmers here. You're making a good living these days, and one of the reasons why is because we're selling Pennsylvania farm products all around the world. We need to be opening up markets. Our market is open; let's get other countries to open up theirs. Give us a level playing field, and America can compete with anybody, anyplace, anywhere, anytime.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Angry talk and class warfare rhetoric and economic isolationism won't get anybody hired. That's not a plan for the future. The best way to make sure our people find work and keep work is to reelect a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business, pro-farmer President, George W. Bush.

America's future also depends on our willingness to lead in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists continue to attack in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness or uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

As in other times, many Americans are serving and sacrificing to keep this country safe and to bring freedom to others. And we thank them for their sacrifice. We mourn the dead and vow never to forget their sacrifice. I thank the families—the wives and the husbands, the moms and the dads, and the sons and daughters—of those whose loved one is overseas serving our Nation. We stand with your loved one. America honors their service.

They serve because after the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, this Nation resolved to fight the terrorists where they dwell. We resolved to hold regimes that hide

and sponsor terrorists to account. Afghanistan was a terror state, provided safe haven for Al Qaida. They trained and plotted and planned there. Because we acted, America is more secure; the training camps no longer exist. Afghanistan is a rising democracy. Young girls go to school for the first time in their lives. And they're an ally—Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror.

Iraq only last year was controlled by a dictator who threatened the civilized world. He had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. For decades he tortured and tormented the people of Iraq. We must never forget the mass graves of the thousands he murdered. Because we acted, America is more secure. Because we acted, Iraq is free and a sovereign nation. And because we acted, the dictator is now in a prison cell and will receive the justice he denied so many for so long.

We must never forget the lessons of September the 11th. It's a lesson—there are many lessons, but I want to share one with you that we—I will never forget, and I hope this country never does: America must confront threats before they fully materialize. When we see a threat, we just can't hope for the best anymore. That's the lesson of September the 11th, and we must never forget the lesson. My administration looked at intelligence, and we remembered the past of Saddam. We remembered he used weapons on his own people. And then we looked at further intelligence, and we saw a threat. The Members of the United States Congress from both political parties looked at the very same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat.

Remember, I went to the United Nations. I said, "For too long, you had said the man is a threat, and he had ignored you." And so we went to the United Nations and demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. That's what the United Nations said. And as he had for over a decade, he ignored the ultimatums of the free world. He said, "Your resolutions don't matter to me."

I happen to believe that when you say something, you better mean it. Well, we said—"we" being the free world—out of the United Nations Security Council said, "Disclose your weapons. Disarm, or face serious consequences." That's what was said. And he denied. He deceived. He wasn't about to listen to the demands. So I had a choice to make: Either take the word of a madman or defend America. Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Although we haven't found stockpiles of weapons, I believe we were right to go into Iraq. And America is safer today because we did. We removed a declared enemy of America who had the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction and could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

We've got tough work to do. We've got hard work to do in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our immediate task in those countries is to capture or kill the terrorists and foreign fighters. Every terrorist we deal with abroad is one who will never do harm to an innocent America or anyone else. You can't talk sense to these people. You can't negotiate with these people. They're coldblooded. They are—they've hijacked a great religion. They're not religious people. You cannot sit back and hope for the best. We must engage these people in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the world, so we do not have to face them here at home. And that's exactly what I will do during the next 4 years.

My most solemn duty is the security of American families. It's my solemn obligation. There is no such thing as perfect security. The threats to our homeland are real. We know the terrorists want to strike us again because they want to spread fear and disrupt our way of life. We've reorganized our Government to protect the homeland. I put a good man in there to run that organization. You trained him well. Tom Ridge is doing a great job. A lot of people are working hard on our behalf, your behalf—a lot of good people. I want to thank the police and firefighters and emergency teams from York, Pennsylvania, for standing on the frontlines of homeland security.

We're defending our homeland; we will defeat the terrorists abroad. Yet, in the long run, our safety and the safety of our children and grandchildren requires something more. We must work to change the conditions that give rise to terror in the Middle East: the poverty, the hopelessness, and the resentments that terrorists can exploit. Life in that region will be far more hopeful and peaceful when men and women can choose their leaders and the people can decide their own future.

By serving the ideal of liberty, we are bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we also serve the deepest ideals of our country. We know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Because we have taken this fight to the enemy, because freedom is rising in places they claim as their own, the terrorists are increasingly desperate. They know their cause is failing. They know that time is against them, and their only chance is to shake the resolve of America and Iraq and anyone else who loves freedom. So their actions have grown even more cruel and sadistic. They cover their faces in videos of their crimes, but those hoods cannot hide the face of evil. We've seen their kind before, in death camps and gulags. And as before, America will persevere. We will fear no evil, and we will prevail.

Our men and women in the military are keeping America more secure. They're taking great risks on our behalf. At bases across the country and around the world, I have had the privilege, the high privilege, of meeting with those who defend our country and sacrifice for our security. I've seen their decency and their unselfish courage. And I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in good hands.

And when we put our soldiers in harm's way, they deserve the very best. They deserve the full commitment of the Federal Government. That's why I proposed supplemental funding to support our military in its mission. This legislation provided for body armor and vital equipment, for hazard pay, for health benefits, ammunition, fuel, and spare parts for the military. In the Senate, only a small, out-of-the-mainstream minority voted against the legislation, and 2 of those 12 senators are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When asked to explain his vote, the Senator from Massachusetts said this: "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it," end quote. That sure clears things up. [*Laughter*] The American President must speak clearly and mean what he says.

America is leading the world with confidence and moral clarity. We have a strong coalition of more than 30 countries in Iraq. I will continue to build on our alliances and to work with our friends for the cause of security and peace. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

This Nation is prosperous and strong, yet we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the hearts and souls of the American citizens. We're strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, our families and our schools, our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives. They deserve the respect of the Government.

We stand for good public schools by insisting on high standards, local control, and strong accountability measures. We stand for fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in our country. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible

for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a dad, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for supporting the teachers and the schools. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high and the challenges are difficult, a time when resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget that day. There were workers in hardhats shouting at me, "Whatever it takes!" I remember looking in the eyes of those firefighters and policemen, and a guy looked at me and said, "Don't ever let me down."

As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of America, whatever it takes.

In these times, I've also been a witness to the character of this Nation. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. We've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most.

We'll need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every part of America. We will make America safer, stronger, and better. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our blessed country, the best days lie ahead.

God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:02 p.m. in the Toyota Arena at the York Fair and Expo Center. In his remarks, he referred to Joe Paterno, head football coach, Pennsylvania State University; Scott Paterno and Charles W. Dent, candidates for Pennsylvania's 17th and 15th Congressional Districts, respectively; Alan Novak, chairman, Republican State Committee of Pennsylvania; and entertainers the Oak Ridge Boys and the Matt Goss Band. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address
July 10, 2004

Good morning. The United States Senate this past week began an important discussion about the meaning of marriage. Senators are considering a constitutional amendment to protect the most fundamental institution of civilization and to prevent it from being fundamentally redefined.

This difficult debate was forced upon our country by a few activist judges and local officials, who have taken it on themselves to change the meaning of marriage. In Massachusetts, four judges on the State's highest court have ordered the issuance of marriage licenses to applicants of the same gender. In San Francisco, city officials issued thousands of marriage licenses to people of the same gender, contrary to the California Family Code. Lawsuits in several States including New Jersey, Florida, Nebraska, and Oregon are also attempting to overturn the traditional definition of marriage by court order.

In 1996, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Defense of Marriage Act, and President Clinton signed it into law. That legislation defines marriage, for purposes of Federal law, as a union between a man and a woman and declares that no State is required to accept another State's definition of marriage. Yet an activist court that strikes down traditional marriage would have little problem striking down the Defense of Marriage Act. Overreaching judges could declare that all marriages recognized in Massachusetts or San Francisco be recognized as marriages everywhere else.

When judges insist on imposing their arbitrary will on the people, the only alternative

left to the people is an amendment to the Constitution—the only law a court cannot overturn. A constitutional amendment should never be undertaken lightly. Yet to defend marriage, our Nation has no other choice.

A great deal is at stake in this matter. The union of a man and woman in marriage is the most enduring and important human institution, and the law can teach respect or disrespect for that institution. If our laws teach that marriage is the sacred commitment of a man and a woman, the basis of an orderly society, and the defining promise of a life, that strengthens the institution of marriage. If courts create their own arbitrary definition of marriage as a mere legal contract and cut marriage off from its cultural, religious, and natural roots, then the meaning of marriage is lost and the institution is weakened.

The Massachusetts court, for example, has called marriage "an evolving paradigm." That sends a message to the next generation that marriage has no enduring meaning and that ages of moral teaching and human experience have nothing to teach us about this institution. For ages, in every culture, human beings have understood that traditional marriage is critical to the well-being of families. And because families pass along values and shape character, traditional marriage is also critical to the health of society. Our policies should aim to strengthen families, not undermine them. And changing the definition of traditional marriage will undermine the family structure.

On an issue of this great significance, opinions are strong and emotions run deep. All of us have a duty to conduct this discussion with civility and decency toward one another. All people deserve to have their voices heard. And that is exactly the purpose behind the constitutional amendment process. American democracy, not court orders, should decide the future of marriage in America.

The process has now begun in the Congress. I urge Members of the House and Senate to pass and send to the States for ratification an amendment that defines marriage in the United States as a union of a man and woman as husband and wife.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on July 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tennessee

July 12, 2004

Thank you for the warm welcome. I realize the Y–12 National Security Complex doesn't get a lot of visitors—[*laughter*]. Thanks for the special arrangements. I'm also glad to have the opportunity to thank each one of you for the vital work you do here. And please pass the word to your fellow employees, many of whom were waving, I want you to know, as we drove in, for which I'm thankful. The Nation counts on your great expertise and your professionalism in producing, protecting, and maintaining material that is critical to our security. America is safer because of your service at Oak Ridge. You need to know our Nation is grateful for that service.

I appreciate our Secretary of Energy, Spence Abraham. He traveled with me today. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your service.

I want to thank Jeffrey Wadsworth, who's the Director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory. It's not the first time I have met Jeffrey. I appreciate Jon Kreykes. I want to thank all the people who helped make this visit a successful visit.

I want to thank Senator Lamar Alexander, the other Members of the United States Congress who are traveling with us today—strong supporters, by the way, of Oak Ridge.

I appreciate the mayor being here, David Bradshaw. Mr. Mayor, appreciate you taking time to come. I want to thank my fellow citizens for giving me a chance to come and visit.

I've just had a close look at some of the dangerous equipment secured in this place. Eight months ago, the centrifuge parts and processing equipment for uranium were 5,000 miles away in the nation of Libya. They

were part of a secret nuclear weapons program. Today, Libya, America, and the world are better off because these components are safely in your care.

These materials are the sobering evidence of a great danger. Certain regimes, often with ties to terrorist groups, seek the ultimate weapons as a shortcut to influence. These materials voluntarily turned over by the Libyan Government are also encouraging evidence that nations can abandon these ambitions and choose a better way.

Libya is dismantling its weapons of mass destruction and long-range missile programs. This progress came about through quiet diplomacy between America, Britain, and the Libyan Government. This progress was set in motion, however, by policies declared in public to all the world. The United States, Great Britain, and many other nations are determined to expose the threats of terrorism and proliferation and to oppose those threats with all our power. We have sent this message in the strongest diplomatic terms, and we have acted where action was required.

Every potential adversary now knows that terrorism and proliferation carry serious consequences, and that the wise course is to abandon those pursuits. By choosing that course, the Libyan Government is serving the interests of its own people and adding to the security of all nations.

America's determination to actively oppose the threats of our time was formed and fixed on September the 11th, 2001. On that day we saw the cruelty of the terrorists, and we glimpsed the future they intend for us. They intend to strike the United States to the limits of their power. They seek weapons of mass destruction to kill Americans on an even greater scale. And this danger is increased when outlaw regimes build or acquire weapons of mass destruction and maintain ties to terrorist groups.

This is our danger but not our fate. America has the resources and the strength and the resolve to overcome this threat. We are waging a broad and unrelenting war against terror and an active campaign against proliferation. We refuse to live in fear. We are making steady progress.

To protect our people, we're staying on the offensive against threats within our own country. We are using the PATRIOT Act to track terrorist activity and to break up terror cells. Intelligence and law enforcement officials are sharing information as never before. We've transformed the mission of the FBI to focus on preventing terrorism. Every element of our homeland security plan is critical because the terrorists are ruthless and resourceful, and we know they're preparing to attack us again. It's not possible to guarantee perfect security in our vast, free nation. But I can assure our fellow Americans, many fine professionals in intelligence and national security and homeland security and law enforcement are working around the clock, doing everything they can to protect the country. And we're grateful to them all.

To overcome the dangers of our time, America is also taking a new approach in the world. We're determined to challenge new threats, not ignore them or simply wait for future tragedy. We're helping to build a hopeful future in hopeless places, instead of allowing troubled regions to remain in despair and explode in violence. Our goal is a lasting, democratic peace in which free nations are free from the threat of sudden terror.

Our strategy for peace has three commitments: First, we are defending the peace by taking the fight to the enemy. We will confront them overseas so we do not have to confront them here at home. We are destroying the leadership of terrorist networks in sudden raids, disrupting their planning and financing, and keeping them on the run. Month by month, we are shrinking the space in which they can freely operate by denying them territory and the support of governments.

Second, we're protecting the peace by working with friends and allies and international institutions to isolate and confront terrorists and outlaw regimes. America is leading a broad coalition of nations to disrupt proliferation. We're working with the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and other international organizations to take action in our common security. The global threat of terrorism requires a global response. To be effective, that global response requires leadership, and America will lead.

Third, we are extending the peace by supporting the rise of democracy and the hope and progress that democracy brings as the alternative to hatred and terror in the broader Middle East. In democratic and successful societies, men and women do not swear allegiance to malcontents and murderers; they turn their hearts and labor to building better lives. And democratic governments do not shelter terrorist camps or attack their peaceful neighbors. When justice and democracy advance, so does the hope of lasting peace.

We have followed this strategy—defending the peace, protecting the peace, and extending the peace—for nearly 3 years. We have been focused and patient, firm and consistent. And the results are all now clear to see.

Three years ago, the nation of Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida, a country ruled by the Taliban, one of the most backward and brutal regimes of modern history. Schooling was denied girls. Women were whipped in the streets and executed in a sports stadium. Millions lived in fear. With protection from the Taliban, Al Qaida and its associates trained, indoctrinated, and sent forth thousands of killers to set up terror cells in dozens of countries, including our own.

Today, Afghanistan is a world away from the nightmare of the Taliban. That country has a good and just President. Boys and girls are being educated. Many refugees have returned home to rebuild their country, and a Presidential election is scheduled for this fall. The terror camps are closed and the Afghan government is helping us to hunt the Taliban and terrorists in remote regions. Today, because we acted to liberate Afghanistan, a threat has been removed and the American people are safer.

Three years ago, Pakistan was one of the few countries in the world that recognized the Taliban regime. Al Qaida was active and recruiting in Pakistan and was not seriously opposed. Pakistan served as a transit point for Al Qaida terrorists leaving Afghanistan on missions of murder. Yet the United States was not on good terms with Pakistan's military and civilian leaders, the very people we would need to help shut down Al Qaida operations in that part of the world.

Today, the Governments of the United States and Pakistan are working closely in the fight against terror. President Musharraf is a friend of our country who helped us capture Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the operational planner behind the September the 11th attacks. And Pakistani forces are rounding up terrorists along their nation's western border. Today, because we're working with the Pakistani leaders, Pakistan is an ally in the war on terror and the American people are safer.

Three years ago, terrorists were well-established in Saudi Arabia. Inside that country, fundraisers and other facilitators gave Al Qaida financial and logistical help with little scrutiny or opposition. Today, after the attacks in Riyadh and elsewhere, the Saudi Government knows that Al Qaida is its enemy. Saudi Arabia is working hard to shut down the facilitators and financial supporters of terrorism. The Government has captured or killed many first-tier leaders of the Al Qaida organization in Saudi Arabia, including one last week. Today, because Saudi Arabia has seen the danger and has joined the war on terror, the American people are safer.

Three years ago, the ruler of Iraq was a sworn enemy of America who provided safe haven for terrorists, used weapons of mass destruction, and turned his nation into a prison. Saddam Hussein was not just a dictator; he was a proven mass murderer who refused to account for weapons of mass murder. Every responsible nation recognized this threat and knew it could not go on forever.

America must remember the lessons of September the 11th. We must confront serious dangers before they fully materialize. And so my administration looked at the intelligence on Iraq, and we saw a threat. Members of the United States Congress from both political parties looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. The previous administration and the Congress looked at the intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country.

In 2002, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. As he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein

refused to comply. In fact, according to former weapons inspector David Kay, Iraq's weapons programs were elaborately shielded by security and deception operations that continued even beyond the end of Operation Iraqi Freedom. So I had a choice to make: Either take the word of a madman, or defend America. Given that choice, I will defend America every time. [*Applause*] Thanks.

Although we have not found stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, we were right to go into Iraq. We removed a declared enemy of America who had the capability of producing weapons of mass murder and could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

Today, the dictator who caused decades of death and turmoil, who twice invaded his neighbors, who harbored terrorist leaders, who used chemical weapons on innocent men, women, and children, is finally before the bar of justice. Iraq, which once had the worst government in the Middle East, is now becoming an example of reform to the region. And Iraqi security forces are fighting beside coalition troops to defeat the terrorists and foreign fighters who threaten their nation and the world. Today, because America and our coalition helped to end the violent regime of Saddam Hussein and because we're helping to raise a peaceful democracy in its place, the American people are safer.

Three years ago, the nation of Libya, a longtime supporter of terror, was spending millions to acquire chemical and nuclear weapons. Today, thousands of Libya's chemical munitions have been destroyed. And nuclear processing equipment that could ultimately have threatened the lives of hundreds of thousands is stored away right here in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Today, because the Libyan Government saw the seriousness of the civilized world and correctly judged its own interests, the American people are safer.

Three years ago, a private weapons proliferation network was doing business around the world. This network, operated by the Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan, was selling nuclear plans and equipment to the highest bidder and found willing buyers in places like Libya, Iran, and North Korea. Today, the A.Q. Khan network is out of business. We have ended one of the most dangerous sources of proliferation in the world, and the American people are safer.

Breaking this proliferation network was possible because of the outstanding work done by the CIA. Dedicated intelligence officers were tireless in obtaining vital information, sometimes at great personal risk. Our intelligence services do an essential job for America. I thank them for their dedication and hard work.

The Senate Intelligence Committee has identified some shortcomings in our intelligence capabilities; the committee's report will help us in the work of reform. Our Nation needs more intelligence agents—what is called human intelligence—to cover the globe. We must have the best cutting-edge technology to listen and look for dangers. We must have better coordination among intelligence services. I need and the Congress needs the best possible intelligence in order to protect the American people. We're determined to make sure we get it.

Three years ago, the world was very different. Terrorists planned attacks with little fear of discovery or reckoning. Outlaw regimes supported terrorists and defied the civilized world without shame and with few consequences. Weapons proliferators sent their deadly shipments and grew wealthy, encountering few obstacles to their trade.

The world changed on September the 11th, and since that day, we have changed the world. We are leading a steady, confident, systematic campaign against the dangers of our time. There are still terrorists who plot against us, but the ranks of their leaders are thinning, and they know what fate awaits them. There are still regimes actively supporting the terrorists, but fewer than there used to be. There are still outlaw regimes pursuing weapons of mass destruction, but the world no longer looks the other way. Today, because America has acted and because America has led, the forces of terror and tyranny have suffered defeat after defeat and America and the world are safer.

All this progress has been achieved with the help of other responsible nations. The case of Libya's nuclear disarmament is a good example. In the fall of 2003, American and

British intelligence were tracking a large shipment of nuclear equipment bound for Tripoli aboard a German-registered cargo ship. We alerted German and Italian authorities, who diverted the ship to an Italian port where the cargo was confiscated. We worked together. These events helped encourage Libya to reconsider its nuclear ambitions. That was a dramatic breakthrough, achieved by allies working together. And the cooperation of America's allies in the war on terror is very, very strong.

We're grateful to the more than 60 nations that are supporting the Proliferation Security Initiative to intercept illegal weapons and equipment by sea, land, and air. We're grateful to the more than 30 nations with forces serving in Iraq and the nearly 40 nations with forces in Afghanistan. In the fight against terror, we've asked our allies to do hard things. They've risen to their responsibilities. We're proud to call them friends.

We have duties, and there will be difficulties ahead. We're working with responsible governments and international institutions to convince the leaders of North Korea and Iran that their nuclear weapons ambitions are deeply contrary to their own interests.

We're helping governments fight poverty and disease so they do not become failed states and future havens for terror. We've launched our Broader Middle East Initiative to encourage reform and democracy throughout the region, a project that will shape the history of our times for the better. We're working to build a free and democratic Palestinian state, which lives in peace with Israel and adds to the peace of the region.

We're keeping our commitments to the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, who are building the world's newest democracies. They're counting on us to help. We will not abandon them. Delivering these nations from tyranny has required sacrifice and loss. We will honor that sacrifice by finishing the great work we have begun.

In this challenging period of our history, Americans fully understand the dangers to our country. We remain a nation at risk, directly threatened by an enemy that plots in secret to cause terrible harm and grief. We remain a nation at war, fighting for our security, our freedom, and our way of life. We also see our advantages clearly. Americans have a history of rising to every test; our generation is no exception. We've not forgotten September the 11th, 2001. We will not allow our enemies to forget it either.

We have strong allies, including millions of people in the Middle East who want to live in freedom. And the ideals we stand for have a power of their own. The appeal of justice and liberty, in the end, is greater than the appeal of hatred and tyranny in any form. The war on terror will not end in a draw. It will end in a victory, and you and I will see that victory of human freedom.

I want to thank you all for coming. Thank you for your dedication. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. in Building 4500 of the laboratory. In his remarks, he referred to Jon Kreykes, manager, National Security Advanced Technology Programs, Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Mayor David Bradshaw of Oak Ridge, TN; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004

July 13, 2004

Thanks for coming. In just 4 years, the African Growth and Opportunity Act has shown the power of free markets to improve the lives of people in both the United States and Africa. By reducing barriers to trade, this law has increased export, created jobs, and expanded opportunity for Africans and Americans alike. It has given American businesses greater confidence to invest in Africa and encouraged African nations to reform their economies and governments to take advantage of the opportunities that AGOA provides.

So today I'm pleased to build on that success and extend the law's benefits long into the future by signing the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004. This legislation is a product of strong bipartisan cooperation, and I thank

the Members of the House and the Senate for working together on this very important piece of legislation. And I want to thank those in the audience who worked hard to see that the bill made it to my desk as quickly as it did.

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for your leadership. Secretary Powell is a strong believer in the potential of the continent of Africa, and so am I.

I appreciate so very much Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist for joining us today. Senator, thank you for coming. I'm pleased to see that my friend, the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, Max Baucus is still standing. [*Laughter*] And I appreciate your leadership, sir. We're honored that Dick Lugar, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is with us. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and thank you for your clear vision for a better world. I appreciate so very much the members of the Ways and Means Committee who are here with us, the chairman and ranking member—Chairman Bill Thomas, who's worked so hard for this legislation, as has his friend and ranking member, Charlie Rangel, both fine Members of the Congress. Thank you all for being here, and thanks for your good work. I also am honored that Ed Royce, the chairman of the International Relations Subcommittee on Africa, has joined us. And soon we'll be joined by Donald Payne, the ranking member as well.

These Members put in good work. They worked hard. They brought the other Members of Congress along with them, many of whom are with us.

I am honored that the dean of the African diplomatic corps stands with me today. Mr. Ambassador, thank you for coming. I'm proud you're here. And thank you for representing the other ambassadors who have joined us today. We appreciate you taking time to come. And thanks for supporting this legislation.

There's a growing consensus in both Africa and the United States that open trade and international investment are the surest and fastest ways for Africa to make progress. That's what you have said; that's what Congress has responded to. For too many years, the world's efforts to promote Africa's development were focused on aid. Development aid is important—nothing wrong with aid. My administration has substantially increased aid to Africa, and we appreciate working with the Members to do that.

But as Uganda's President Museveni has said, "By itself, aid cannot transform societies. Only trade can foster the sustained economic growth necessary for such transformation." This African leader understands that when nations close their markets and opportunity is hoarded by a privileged few, no amount of development aid is ever enough. But when nations respect their people, open their markets, expand freedom and opportunity to all their citizens, entire societies can be lifted out of poverty and despair. This is a hopeful piece of legislation. As America works for open markets and opportunity on the African Continent, we will also confront disease and hunger and the violence that undermines progress and hope.

I'm deeply concerned about the humanitarian and human rights crisis in Darfur, Sudan. For the sake of peace and basic humanity, I echo the sentiments of the Secretary of State. I call upon the Government of the Sudan to stop the Janjaweed violence. I call on all parties of the conflict to respect the cease-fire, to respect human rights, and to allow for the free movement of humanitarian workers and aid. The United States and the United Nations and the leadership of the African Union are working to bring relief to the suffering people of that region. America will continue to strongly support these efforts for peace.

One way to spread peace is to encourage political and economic reform across Africa by opening markets here in the United States. It's important for our people to understand, by opening United States markets we make it more likely there will be peace on the continent of Africa.

AGOA nations are strengthening the rule of law. They are lowering trade barriers. They're combating corruption and eliminating child labor. They're setting an important example for the entire continent, demonstrating that governments that respect individual rights and encourage the development of their markets are more likely to grow economically and achieve political stability.

Like all good partnerships, AGOA has been beneficial to all parties. Free trade between the United States and sub-Sahara Africa has created jobs, wealth, and opportunity on both continents. Last year under AGOA, African exports to the United States increased by 55 percent and African—and American businesses saw a 15-percent increase in our exports to sub-Sahara Africa—that equals almost $7 billion. The most notable gains were made by American companies selling agricultural goods and machinery and transportation equipment.

See, when you sell goods in Africa, it means somebody is finding work here at home. Trade must work both ways. AGOA has been beneficial to the people of the continent of Africa and to the people of the United States of America. That's why this is a good piece of legislation.

Since its enactment in 2000, AGOA has generated over $340 million in investment and created thousands of jobs. Things are happening because of the law we're extending today, positive things for people in Africa and in America. The enactment of this law will help ensure that this mutually beneficial trade continues. Trade and investment from around the world is essential to world peace. The United States and the nations of the sub-Saharan Africa are working together to break down trade barriers around the world—not just between ourselves but around the world.

My trade representative, Ambassador Bob Zoellick, is in Africa right now. He's meeting with his counterparts from across the continent to prepare for the World Trade Organization meeting in Geneva later this month. These are important meetings. They're important meetings for the people of the United States; they're important meetings for the people on the continent of Africa. And the reason why is because we want to advance our shared economic agenda, and it's very important for our AGOA partners to help make these talks in Geneva a success.

Pass the word on to your capitals: No region has more to gain from free markets than Africa. That's the message. And no region has more to lose from a stalled WTO process than Africa. By working together and by our example, we can show the world that a new global trade agreement can bring greater prosperity to all nations.

Real prosperity is the work of many years. I know that. It's hard work. It's hard to change the status quo. This law encourages the change in the status quo.

I'm so pleased and proud to see the ambassadors from the African nations who are here. Thank you all for coming. You've worked hard to make AGOA a success. You've worked hard to spread the message in the halls of Congress, and your hard work has paid off. I share your optimism about Africa's future. That's what we believe. Those of us who are standing up here believe in the future of Africa. We appreciate the commitment to freedom. We appreciate your understanding that we all have an obligation to spread opportunity throughout all corners of this important part of the world.

And now, it is my honor to sign this important piece of legislation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Ambassador Roble Olhaye of Djibouti. H.R. 4103, approved July 13, was assigned Public Law 108–274.

Remarks in Marquette, Michigan

July 13, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thanks for inviting me. I'm proud to be here in Marquette, Michigan. I'm proud to be on this beautiful campus of Northern Michigan University. You know, I just heard that William H. Taft was the last sitting President to visit this city. The rest of them missed out on a lot. They should have come. And I'm glad I did come. By the way I'm looking at things, the UP is Bush-Cheney country.

I'm here to ask for your vote. I'm here to ask for your help. I'm here to ask you to get your friends and neighbors to register. Tell them they have a duty as an American citizen to go to the polls. When you get them heading to the polls, make sure they pull that George W. lever. The best way to make sure America has strong, consistent, optimistic

leadership is to put Dick Cheney and me back in office for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I'm going to talk about what I intend to do for the next 4 years, but perhaps the best reason to put me back in there is so that Laura will be the First Lady for 4 more years. I married a fabulous woman. She is a great First Lady. And traveling with me today is one of our daughters, a newly graduate from college, Barbara Bush. Thanks for coming, Barbara.

I appreciate being introduced by Steve Mariucci. I told him so. [*Applause*] Yes! I told him so! Do you know what he said to me? He said, "You get reelected, and I'm bringing the Lions to the White House." And if anybody can lead that group of men, he can. He's a fine man. I'm proud to call him friend. I know you're proud to call him citizen of the UP. Thank you, Steve, for coming. I'm proud you're here.

I want to thank Dr. Les Wong and Phyliss for greeting me. And thanks for opening up this beautiful facility. Thanks for working to educate our children too.

I appreciate Steve Trent, a National Guard staff sergeant of the 652d Engineer Company that led the Pledge. I appreciate his service to the United States of America. I appreciate all who wear the uniform of the United States of America.

I want to thank the grassroots supporters who are here. Those are the people that are going to turn out the vote. Those are the hard-working people that are going to do their duty in democracy and gather up the voters and get them to the polls. I want to thank you for what you're going to do and urge you to do so. If you'd like some instructions, if you'd like a go-by, get on the Internet at georgewbush.com and sign up to become a volunteer in this campaign. The stakes are high, and I'm ready to lead the country.

The last 3½ years have brought serious challenges, and we have given serious answers. We came to office with the stock market in decline and an economy headed into recession. We delivered historic tax relief. Over the past 3 years, America has had the fastest growing economy of any major industrialized nation in the world.

We uncovered corporate crimes that cost people their jobs and their savings, so we passed strong corporate reforms. We are bringing the wrongdoers to account. We are making it clear we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw grief and war arrive on a quiet September morning, so we pursued the terrorist enemy around the world. We've captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network. We will stay on the hunt until justice is served and America is safe.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, so we acted against two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We have liberated over 50 million people. Once again, America is proud to lead the armies of liberation.

When the Vice President and I came to Washington, the military was underfunded and underappreciated, so we gave our Armed Forces the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

We've accomplished a lot on behalf of the American people. You see, I believe it is my job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. It is my job to make the hard decisions and to keep my commitments. And with your help, that is how I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I enjoy campaigning. I like to be with the people. I'm not afraid to ask for the vote, because I know we've got a tough campaign. I'm running against a strong candidate. He's been in Washington a lot longer than I have. He's been there long enough to take both sides of just about every issue. He voted for the PATRIOT Act. He voted for NAFTA. He voted for the No Child Left Behind Act and for the use of force in Iraq. Now he opposes the PATRIOT Act. He opposes NAFTA. He opposes the No Child Left Behind Act and the liberation of Iraq. He kind of reminds me of the weather here—[*laughter*]—just wait a day, and it's going to change. Recently, campaigning in

the Midwest, he even tried to claim he was the candidate with conservative values.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I know—I know, but those were his own words. Kind of hard to square that with what he said when he said, "I'm a liberal and proud of it." And now he has a runningmate. Senator Kerry is rated as the most liberal member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And he chose the fourth most liberal member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Back in Massachusetts, that's what they call balancing the ticket. [*Laughter*]

Great events will turn on this election. The person who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. I'm seeking the vote because I have a vision and a strategy to win the war on terror and extend peace and freedom throughout the world. I'm seeking your vote because I have a plan to continue to create jobs and opportunity for every single American. I want your help because I have a plan to rally the compassionate spirit of Americans so every single citizen has a chance to realize the great promise of our country. Give me a chance to be your President, and America will be safer and stronger and better.

A big issue for every family in America is the tax burden. By providing the largest Federal tax relief since Ronald Reagan was the President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and helping create more jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Government would have.

This economy of ours is strong, and it's growing stronger. Since last summer, our economy has been growing at its fastest rate in nearly 20 years. In less than a year's time, we've added 1.5 million new jobs. Here in Michigan, you've added over 29,600 new jobs since February. Your unemployment is 6.5 percent—too high—but it has dropped by more than a full point since December, and it is moving in the right direction.

Across this country, the manufacturing sector is growing stronger. Homeownership rates are at an alltime high. Interest rates are low. Business investment is growing. Consumer confidence is at a 2-year high. Personal incomes are on the rise. The tax relief we passed is working.

My opponents look at all this progress and somehow conclude that the sky is falling. But whether their message is delivered with a frown or a smile, it's the same old pessimism. And to cheer us up, they propose higher taxes, more Federal spending, and economic isolationism.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That is the surest way to end economic growth and to put Americans out to work. This Nation is on the path to progress, and we will not turn back.

To sustain this economic growth, we need to keep taxes low. Higher taxes right now would undermine growth and destroy jobs. To help grow the American economy and create more jobs, I have a better idea than raising taxes. We need to make the tax relief permanent. We ought not to be raising taxes on the American people.

We need to be smart about how we spend the money in Washington, DC. We need fiscal discipline and fiscal sanity. It starts with understanding whose money we spend. We're not spending the Government's money in Washington, DC; we're spending your money. And you deserve fiscally sound Government.

In order to make sure this economy grows and people can find work, we need to stop frivolous lawsuits. You cannot be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent has made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. I've made my choice: I will continue to push Congress for reform to end the junk lawsuits that are hurting small businesses and hurting the job creators of America.

In order to make sure people can find work, Americans must have affordable health insurance. And the way to do that is not to have the Federal Government make all the decisions on behalf of the consumers of America. We must not federalize health care

in America. The best way to do so is to empower the American people through association health plans, tax-free health savings accounts. And for the sake of affordable health care, we need to pass national medical liability reform.

To make sure people can find work, to make sure this is the most competitive place in the world to do business, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. Listen, I understand we need to modernize our electricity grid, and we've got a plan to do so. We will encourage more conservation. We will spend research and development monies on how to grow our way out of independence. Listen, I want to be the President who says, "The corn crop is up, and we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." But for the sake of economic security, we need to be developing our own resources in an environmentally friendly way. For the sake of national security, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

No, the best way to make sure this economy continues to grow is to make sure America is the best place for people to risk capital, to make sure the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, to have less regulation and less taxes for the small-business people of America. This administration understands how to create economic opportunity for all Americans. Reelect us, and you'll have a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business President of the United States.

America's future also depends on our willingness to lead in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists continue to attack in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness or uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. That will not happen on my watch.

After the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, this Nation resolved to fight terrorists where they dwell. We resolved to hold regimes that hide and sponsor terrorists to account. Afghanistan was a terrorist state, a training camp for the Al Qaida killers. Because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy; Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror. And because we acted, a barbaric regime was removed from power, and many young girls now go to school for the first time in their lives.

Iraq, only last year, was controlled by a dictator who threatened the civilized world, a dictator who had used weapons of mass destruction against his own people. For decades, he tormented and tortured the people of Iraq. Because we acted, Iraq today is a free and sovereign nation. Because we acted, its dictator is now in a prison cell and will receive the justice he denied so many for so long.

September the 11th taught a lesson I will never forget and America must never forget: America must confront threats before they fully materialize. My administration looked at the facts and the history and looked at the intelligence in Iraq, and we saw a threat. Members of the United States Congress from both political parties looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. The previous administration and the previous Congress looked at the intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country.

In 2002, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. They did so because they saw a threat. And as he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply. He deceived the inspectors. He did everything he can to deny access to the truth. And so I had a choice to make: Either take the word of a madman, or defend the United States of America. And given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Although we have not found stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, we were right to go into Iraq. And America is safer today because we did. We removed a declared enemy of America who had the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction and could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

We still have important and difficult work to do. Our immediate task in Iraq and Afghanistan is to capture or kill the terrorists and foreign fighters. You see, you can't talk sense into these people. You can't negotiate with the terrorists. You can't sit back and hope for the best. We must engage these enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq and around the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

In a country as big as ours, there's no such thing as perfect security, and threats to our homeland are real. We know the terrorists want to strike the United States again, to spread fear and disrupt our way of life. So we reorganized the Government to better protect the homeland. There's a lot of good people—really a lot of good people—working hard on your behalf. Speaking for everybody here, I want to thank the first responders of the UP, the firefighters and the police and the emergency teams.

No, we're doing everything we can to defend the homeland, and we'll stay strong and relentless in defeating the terrorists abroad. Yet in the long run, our safety requires something more. We must work to change the conditions that gave rise to terror in the Middle East, the poverty and the hopelessness and the resentment that terrorists can exploit. Life in that region will be far more hopeful and peaceful when men and women can choose their own leaders and the people can decide their own future.

By serving the ideal of liberty, we are bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we also serve e deepest ideals of our country. We understand that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

The world is changing for the better because of American leadership. America is safer today because we're leading the world. Afghanistan was once the home base of Al Qaida. Now terror camps are closed, democracy on the rising, and the American people are safer. Pakistan used to be a safe transit point for terrorists on missions of murder. Now Pakistani forces are rounding up terrorists, and the American people are safer. In Saudi Arabia, terrorists were meeting little opposition. And today, the Saudi Government is taking the fight to Al Qaida, and the American people are safer. Not long ago, Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Now, thousands of Libya's chemical munitions have been destroyed, Libya has given up nuclear processing equipment, and the American people are safer. Not long ago, the dictator in Iraq had the capability of producing weapons of mass murder. And now, the dictator is a threat to nobody, and the American people are safer.

We will finish the work we have begun in Afghanistan and Iraq. These nations have courageous and responsible leaders, people who believe in the future of their countries. And nations around the world are helping. The NATO Alliance, the EU, the United Nations are standing behind the newly liberated peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan. And these good people are taking more and more responsibility. They're beginning to defend themselves because they want to live in a free society.

And these people must hear our voices loud and clear: They can count on America and on our coalition. We promised to help deliver them from tyranny, to restore their sovereignty, and to set them on the path to democracy. And when America gives its word, America keeps its word.

And our men and women in the military are keeping America's commitment, and they're taking great risks for our security. At bases across the country and the world, I've had the privilege of meeting with those who defend our country and sacrifice for our security. It's important for those loved ones who have lost a husband or a wife or a son or daughter to know that the best way to honor the memory of your loved one is to complete the mission, is to work for peace and freedom around the world. I've seen the decency of our troops. I know their unselfish courage. And I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in really good hands.

And we owe it to the loved ones of our troops to make sure that their mission is fully funded, that they have the best. That's why I proposed what they call supplemental funding to support our military mission. I did so

last fall. The legislation provided funding for body armor and vital equipment, for hazard pay, for health benefits, for ammunition, for fuel, for spare parts. In the Senate, only a small, out-of-the-mainstream minority voted against the legislation. And 2 of those 12 Senators are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Senator Kerry tried to explain his vote by saying this: "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] That sure clears things up. [*Laughter*] And now, just recently, he offered a different explanation. Yesterday my opponent said he is proud that he and his runningmate voted against funding the troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, listen, he's entitled to his view—he's entitled to his view. But Members of Congress should not vote to send troops into battle and then vote against funding them and then brag about it. Leaders need to stand up with our military. We need to back them 100 percent. And that is what I will continue to do as the Commander in Chief of a great United States military.

America is leading the world with confidence and moral clarity. We have a strong coalition to help us defeat the terrorists: 60 nations in the Proliferation Security Initiative; nearly 40 nations in Afghanistan; we have more than 30 countries with us in Iraq. We will continue to build our alliances and work with our friends in the cause of security and peace. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other foreign countries.

Our Nation is strong because—the Nation is strong because we're prosperous. We're strong because we've got a great military. Yet we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the character of our citizens. The other day my opponent said, when he was with some entertainers from Hollywood, that they were the heart and soul of America.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I believe the heart and soul of America is found in places right here in Marquette, Michigan. We are strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, and our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives. They deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for high standards in our public schools. We believe in local control of schools. We believe in strong accountability. We believe in parental involvement so no child is left behind in America.

We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law, instead of legislating from the bench.

We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We've been making progress on building the culture of life here in America. Members of both political parties believe that moms and dads should be involved in important decisions of their minor daughters. Members of both parties came together to pass the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, to punish the violent crimes against mothers and their unborn children. Members of both parties voted to end the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion. Republicans and Democrats agree on these issues. Yet on these positions that so many Americans share, my opponent is on the other side.

We also stand for a culture of responsibility in America. We're changing the culture of America from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your children with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education right here in Marquette, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this

new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period where the stakes are high and the challenges are difficult, a time when resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget that day. There were workers in hardhats shouting, "Whatever it takes." A guy grabbed me by the arm—he was a firefighter or a policeman—his eyes were bloodshot. He said, "Don't you let me down."

As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of the United States, whatever it takes.

In these times, I've also been witness to the character of the Nation. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. We've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most. We will need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every part of America.

This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our blessed land, the best days lie ahead.

Thanks for coming. May God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Superior Dome at Northern Michigan University. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Mariucci, head coach, Detroit Lions, National Football League; and Leslie E. Wong, president, Northern Michigan University, and his wife, Phyliss.

Remarks in Duluth, Minnesota

July 13, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for inviting me, and thanks for coming. Laura and I last came to Duluth in November of 2000. It was a little colder that day. [*Laughter*] Any day is a good day to be here in this beautiful part of the world, and I'm really glad to be back.

I appreciate the good folks from Minnesota and Iron Ridge and Northern Wisconsin who are with us today. Thanks for coming. And by the look of things, I'm in Bush-Cheney country.

I'm here to ask for the vote. I'm here to ask for your help. I'm so proud you all came. Thanks a lot. Here's what I want to tell you today: To make sure America has strong, consistent, optimistic leadership, send us back to the White House for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Today I want to explain how I want to continue to lead this country, but perhaps the best reason to send me back to the White House is so that Laura will be First Lady for 4 more years. I'm a lucky man. I'm a lucky man when she said yes when I asked her to marry me. What a fabulous lady and First Lady she has become. I'm sorry she's not here. But I am proud that one of our daughters, Barbara, is traveling with me today. I love that you're here, darling. Thanks for coming.

I appreciate the fact that the Governor was here. I'm proud to call him friend. I know you're proud to call him Governor. I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor for being here today. Thanks for coming, Governor. I'm proud you're here. I know the State Auditor, Pat Anderson, is with us. Thanks for coming, Pat. I appreciate you coming. I want to thank all those who serve the State and serve your local community for your willingness to serve the people.

I appreciate so very much Lieutenant Colonel Joe Repya for being here today. Joe, thanks for coming, sir. I'm proud to have the Minnesota veterans for me. Thank you for your service.

I thank my friend Dan Urshan for being here. He's in charge of the grassroots campaign. His job is to turn out the vote, and so is yours. If you're interested in helping, get on the Internet for georgewbush.com. It's a place where you can learn how to volunteer. See, I'm here to nurture those grassroots. I'm here to say I can't win it without your help. And I appreciate you coming.

I want to thank Bob Lessard, who's the Minnesota Sportsmen for Bush chairman. I'm honored that so many sportsmen, hunters and fishermen, are here. Thank you all for coming. I want to thank the Minnesota Teen Challenge Choir for being here today. Most of all, I want to thank you all. I'm so honored you came. We're going to win.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind the folks that the last 3½ years have brought serious challenges, and we have given serious answers. When we came to office, the stock market was in decline and the economy was headed into a recession. We delivered historic tax relief, and over the past 3 years, America has had the fastest growing economy of any major industrialized nation in the world.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning, so we have pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We've captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and we will stay on the hunt until justice is done and America is secure.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We acted against two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We liberated over 50 million people. America is once again proud to lead the armies of liberation.

When my really fine Vice President, Dick Cheney, and I came to Washington, the military was underfunded and underappreciated, so we gave our Armed Forces the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

These accomplishments are important to the security and the prosperity of America. It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. A President must make hard decisions and keep his commitments, and that is how I will lead our country for 4 more years.

I'm ready for the race. I look forward to it, and it's going to be a tough contest. Now, I'm running against an experience United States Senator. He's been in Washington a lot longer than I have.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's been there long enough to take both sides of just about every issue. He voted for the PATRIOT Act, for NAFTA, for the No Child Left Behind Act, and for the use of force in Iraq. Now, he opposes the PATRIOT Act, NAFTA, the No Child Left Behind Act, and the liberation of Iraq.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If you disagree with my——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If you disagree with my opponent on most any issue, you may just have caught him on the wrong day. Recently here in the Midwest, he even tried to claim he was the candidate with conservative values.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I know—I know. But that's what he said. [*Laughter*] A bit hard to square that with my opponent's previous statement when he said, "I'm liberal and proud of it." [*Laughter*]

Now he has a runningmate. Senator Kerry is rated as the most liberal member of the United States Senate, and he chose a fellow lawyer who is the fourth most liberal member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Back in Massachusetts, that's what they call balancing the ticket. [*Laughter*]

Great events will turn on this election. The person who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. I'm asking for your vote because I have a vision and a strategy to win the war on terror and to extend peace and freedom throughout the world. I'm asking for your vote because I have a plan to continue

to create jobs and opportunity for every single American. I'm asking for your vote because I have a plan and a deep desire to rally the compassionate spirit of America, so every single American has a chance to realize his or her dreams. When the people give us 4 more years, America will be safer, America will be stronger, and America will be better.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. A big issue in this campaign and a big issue for every family in America is their tax burden——

[*At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.*]

The President. By providing the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was the President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and helping create new jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Government would have.

Our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. Since last summer, our economy has been growing at its fastest rate in nearly 20 years. In less than a year's time, we've added more than 1.5 million new jobs. People are going back to work here in America. Here in the great State of Minnesota, the unemployment rate has dropped to 4.3 percent. Across this country, the manufacturing sector is growing stronger, with 64,000 jobs created since January. The homeownership rate is at an alltime high. Business investment is growing. Consumer confidence is at a 2-year high. Personal incomes are on the rise. The tax relief we passed is working.

My opponents look at all this progress and somehow conclude that the sky is falling. [*Laughter*] But whether their message is delivered with a frown or a smile, it's the same old pessimism. And to cheer us up, they propose higher taxes, more Federal spending, and economic isolationism. The surest way to end economic growth and put Americans out of work is their plan. This Nation is on the path to progress, and we're not going there.

To sustain economic growth, we need to keep taxes low. Higher taxes would undermine growth and destroy jobs. To help the American economy and create more jobs for American workers, my message to Congress is this: Make the tax relief permanent. Do not raise the taxes on the American people.

In order to make sure this economy continues to grow, we've got to be smart about how we spend your money. We need to set priorities. We need to make sure we don't overpromise with the people's money. The best way to make sure that we're wise with your money is to remember whose money we spend in the first place. It is not the Government's money we spend in Washington; it is the people's money.

And there's more we need to do. We need to stop the frivolous lawsuits. You cannot be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent has made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. [*Laughter*] I made my choice. I will continue to push Congress for reform to end the junk lawsuits that are hurting our small businesses all across America.

In order to make sure people work in America and to make sure this economy is strong, we've got to help more Americans better afford health insurance by giving people better access to health care through association health plans, giving Americans more control over their health care through tax-free health savings accounts. And to make sure you've got a doctor around here and to make sure the cost of health care goes down, we need to pass medical liability reform in Washington, DC.

In order to make sure America is a good place to invest so people can find work, we need to pass sound energy legislation. I submitted a bill to the United States Congress 2 years ago. They need to get the bill to my desk. It's a bill that will modernize our electricity system. It is a bill that will encourage conservation. It is a bill that encourages alternative sources of energy. But it is also a bill that recognizes we can explore for coal and natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. For the sake of economic security and national security, we need to be less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

The Minnesota farmers are doing well. You know why? Because we're selling farm products all over the world. When you're good at something, you ought to encourage it. We're good at growing things. We're good

at building things. And we ought to be opening up markets, rather than falling prey to the false hopes of economic isolationism. This country needs to have a President that's willing to knock down the barriers so that we can compete anytime, anyplace, anywhere on a level playing field.

What I'm telling you is in order to make sure this economy is robust today and tomorrow, you need to put back in the White House a pro-growth, a pro-entrepreneur, a pro-farmer, a pro-small-business President, and that's George W. Bush.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. America's future also depends on our willingness to lead in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists continue to attack in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness or uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. That's not going to happen on my watch.

After the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, this Nation resolved and I resolved to fight the terrorists wherever they dwell. We resolved to hold regimes that hide and sponsor terrorists to account. Afghanistan was a terrorist state, a training camp for Al Qaida killers. Because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy and an ally in the war on terror. Because we acted, many young girls go to school for the first time in their life.

Iraq, only last year, was controlled by a dictator who threatened the civilized world and had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. For decades, he tormented and tortured the people of Iraq. Because we acted, Iraq today is a free and sovereign nation. Because we acted, the dictator is now in a prison cell and will receive the justice he denied so many for so long.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson this Nation must never forget. It's a lesson I will never forget: America must confront threats before they fully materialize. And so my administration, remembering the history of Saddam Hussein, looked at the intelligence, and we saw a threat. Members of the United States Congress from both political parties looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. The previous administration and the Congress looked at the same intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our Government.

In 2002, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. The world came together. The world saw a threat and said, "Declare, disarm, or face serious consequences." As he had for over a decade, he defied the free world. He refused to comply. As a matter of fact, he systematically deceived the inspectors. What was he trying to hide?

So we had a choice to make—I had a choice to make: Either take the word of a madman, or defend our country. Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Although we have not found stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, we were right to go into Iraq. America and the world is safer because we did. We removed a declared enemy of America who had the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction and could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

We still have important and difficult work to do. Our immediate task in Iraq and Afghanistan is to capture or kill the terrorists and foreign fighters. You see, you can't talk sense to them. You can't negotiate with these people. You can't sit back and hope for the best. We must engage our enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq and around the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

In a country as big as ours, there's no such thing as perfect security, and threats to our homeland are real. We know that the terrorists want to strike the United States again to spread fear and disrupt our way of life. So we have reorganized our Government to better protect the homeland. And a lot of good people—I mean, a lot of good people—are working long hours to protect you and the American people. I know I speak for everybody here when I thank the Nation's first-responders—the police and firefighters and emergency teams of Duluth, Minnesota.

We're defending our homeland. We're defeating the terrorists abroad. Yet, in the long run, our safety requires something more. We must work to change the conditions that give rise to terror in the Middle East, the poverty and the hopelessness and the resentment that terrorists can exploit. Life in that region will be far more hopeful and peaceful when men and women can choose their own leaders and the people can decide their own future. By serving the ideal of liberty, we are bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're also serving the deepest ideals of our country. We understand that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

The world is changing because of our leadership. Three years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Now the terror camps are closed, and democracy is rising, and the American people are safer. Three years ago, Pakistan was a safe transit point for terrorists on missions of murder. Now Pakistani forces are rounding up the terrorists. They're joining us in the war on terror, and the American people are safer. Three years ago in Saudi Arabia, the terrorists were finding little opposition. Now the Saudi Government is taking the fight to Al Qaida, and America is safer for it. Three years ago, Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Now thousands of Libya's chemical munitions have been destroyed. Libya has given up nuclear processing equipment, and the American people are safer for it.

The world is changing for the better. Three years ago, a dictator in Iraq had the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction. He had ties to terrorist organizations. He hated America. He was paying families of suicide bombers. That dictator is no longer a threat, and the American people are safer.

We have more work to do. We're determined to finish the work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq. Those nations now have courageous and responsible leaders. And nations around the world are rallying to help. The NATO Alliance, the EU, and United Nations are standing behind the newly-liberated people of Iraq and Afghanistan. These good people are taking more and more responsibility for their own security. They want to live in freedom, just like you and I love to live in freedom. And those people need to know they can count on America. We promised to help deliver them from tyranny, to restore their sovereignty, and to set them on the path to democracy. When America gives its word, America keeps its word.

Our men and women in the military are keeping America's commitment. They're taking great risks on our behalf. At bases across our country and the world, I've had the privilege of meeting with those who defend our country and those who sacrifice for our country. I've had the privilege of meeting the family members of those who have been lost in combat. The best way to honor their memory is to complete the work before us.

We've got a fantastic military because we've got fantastic people in the military. I've seen their great decency and their unselfish courage. I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in really good hands.

And we better make sure they have all they need. Last September, I proposed what we call supplemental funding to support our military in its mission. The legislation provided funding for body armament and vital equipment, for hazard pay, health benefits, ammunition, fuel, and spare parts for our military. This was an important vote. In the United States Senate only a small, out-of-the-mainstream minority * voted against the legislation. And 2 of those 12 Senators are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Senator Kerry tried to explain his vote by saying this: "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it," end quote. [*Laughter*] That really clears it up. [*Laughter*] Now he is offering a different explanation. Yesterday, Senator Kerry said he is proud that he and his runningmate voted against the funding for the troops. Now listen, he's entitled to his view. But Members of Congress should not vote to send troops into battle and then vote against funding them.

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* White House correction.

America is leading the world with confidence and moral clarity. We have built strong coalitions to make the world a safer place. We've got over 60 nations in the Proliferation Security Initiative; nearly 40 nations are in Afghanistan; more than 30 countries are in Iraq. As your President, I will continue to build our alliances and work with our friends in the cause of peace and freedom and security. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

This Nation is prosperous and strong, yet we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the character of our citizens. The other day, my opponent said that a bunch of entertainers from Hollywood conveyed the heart and soul of America.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I believe the heart and soul of America is found in places like Duluth, Minnesota.

Our Nation is strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institution that helped to give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, and our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for high standards in our public schools, local control of our public schools, accountability in our public schools, so no child is left behind in America. We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which would help millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law, instead of legislating from the bench.

We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We're making progress on building that culture of life here in America. Members of both parties believe that moms and dads should be involved in important decisions by their minor daughters. Members of parties came together to pass the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, to punish violent crimes against mothers and their unborn children. Members of both parties voted to end the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Republicans and Democrats can agree on these issues. Yet on the positions that so many Americans share, my opponent is on the other side. That's not the mainstream of this country. We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. The culture of this country is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high and the challenges are difficult, a time when firm resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget that day. Workers in hardhats were chanting, "Whatever it takes." I remember working—trying to console people, and either a firefighter or a policeman said, "Do not let me down."

As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of America, whatever it takes.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In these times, I have seen the—witness—I have been witness to the character of this Nation. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. And we've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most.

We will need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win. And the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have the duty to spread opportunity to every corner of this country. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our blessed country, the best days lie ahead.

God bless. Thank you for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Pawlenty and Lt. Gov. Carol Molnau of Minnesota; Lt. Col. Joe Repya, USA (Ret.), Minnesota veterans cochair, and Dan Urshan, Minnesota leadership team, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks in Waukesha, Wisconsin

July 14, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. It's good to be back here in Waukesha. What a beautiful day. Listen, I was talking to Tommy, and I said, "You know, I need to get back to Wisconsin." He said, "You sure do." I said, "Do you know your way around there?" [*Laughter*] So he and I have gotten on this modest little bus here. [*Laughter*] And we're going to travel your beautiful State.

I'm here asking for the vote. I've come back to this important State to say to the people of Wisconsin, I know what I need to do to lead this country. I know what I need to do to make the world more peaceful, America more hopeful. I know what I want to do to make America safer, stronger, and better. I'm here to ask for your help for 4 more years.

And I couldn't have come with a better escort. You educated him well. [*Laughter*] I picked a good man when I asked him to come to Washington to lead a very important agency. He is a superb leader. He's a great organizer. He's got a clear vision. He cares deeply about the people of Wisconsin and the United States of America. Tommy Thompson is doing a fabulous job on behalf of the American people.

My only regret, and I'm sure it's yours as well, is that Laura is not traveling with me. No, I know, most people are wise enough to say, "Why don't you just go ahead and stay at home and let her carry the burden." [*Laughter*] I was a lucky man when she said yes. She's a great lady and a fabulous First Lady for America. She's campaigning somewhere else, but today I am fortunate that one of our college graduates, one of our daughters, is traveling with me. I'm really proud to introduce Barbara Bush. Made it out of college in 4 years. [*Laughter*]

I know Sue Ann Thompson is with us, and so is Tommy—Tommy's daughter. I appreciate the Thompson family as well for enabling Tommy to serve the country so well. Listen, being in public life isn't easy on the families, and Tommy has got a great family. And I appreciate their supporting him so well.

I appreciate Cheryl Sensenbrenner representing her husband, Jim. The chairman is doing a fine job. He's a good Congressman. I enjoy working with him. I know you're going to send him back, and I know you're going to send me back, so we'll be working together for 4 more years.

I want to thank my friend State Senator Mary Panzer, the majority leader of the statehouse, the State senate, for being here today. Thanks for coming, Mary. Mary Lazich as well, who's the State senator. Thanks for the members of the senate and the house and all the local officials who are here to say hello. Turn out the vote. Thanks for serving. But join these grassroots activists in finding people to register, and tell them they've got a duty as an American to show up and vote on election day. And when you get them steered toward the polls, give them a little

nudge in our direction. [*Laughter*] They're going to like the message. It's hopeful. It's optimistic. It's positive about the future of this great country.

I appreciate Jim Klauser and Mary Buestrin, all the people who have dedicated themselves to being involved in the political process. By the way, if you're interested in volunteering, we've gone high tech—georgewbush.com. It's an easy one to remember. [*Laughter*] Why don't you just go ahead and log on, and it will show you how you can help in the campaign. I'm serious. It's a—I can't win this without you.

I can't win—and when you're talking to the voters, remind them that over the last 3 years, we have faced serious challenges, and this administration has given serious answers. You might remind the voters that when we came to office, the stock market was in decline and the economy was headed into recession. We acted. We delivered historic tax relief. And over the past 3 years, America has had the fastest growing economy of any major industrialized nation.

When we arrived in Washington, DC—when the great Vice President Dick Cheney and I arrived in Washington, DC—the military was underfunded, and it was underappreciated. You might remember back to those times. So we gave our Armed Forces the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning. We pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network. We will stay on the hunt until justice is served and America is safe. We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We acted against two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We liberated over 50 million people. Once again, America is proud to lead the armies of liberation.

These accomplishments are important to the security and prosperity of America. They should say to the American people, I understand it is my job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. It's the President's job to make the tough decisions and to keep his commitments. And that is how I will continue to lead this country for 4 more years.

I'm working hard because this is going to be a tough campaign. I know it, and you know it. We take nothing for granted. We got a lot of work to do. I've got to take my message out to the people. I've got to rally the volunteers such as yourselves to go to work. I'm looking forward to it. My opponent is a highly experienced United States Senator. He's been in Washington——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's been in Washington a lot longer than I've been in Washington. He's been there so long, he's taken about both sides of just about every issue. He voted for PATRIOT Act. He voted for NAFTA. He voted for the No Child Left Behind Act, and he voted for the use of force in Iraq. Now—[*laughter*]—he opposes the PATRIOT Act and NAFTA and the No Child Left Behind Act and the liberation of Iraq. If you disagree with John Kerry on most any issue, you may just have caught him on the wrong day. [*Laughter*]

He came out here to the Midwest, and he said he was the candidate with the conservative values.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I know. I know—I know. [*Laughter*] I'm just quoting what he said. [*Laughter*] It's hard to square that when he said, "I'm liberal and proud of it." Now he has a runningmate. Senator Kerry is rated as the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. And he chose a fellow lawyer who is the fourth most liberal Member of the United States Senate. Now in Massachusetts, that's what they call balancing the ticket. [*Laughter*]

Great events will turn on this election. The person who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and set the course, the direction of our economy. I'm here to ask for the vote because I have a clear vision and a strategy to win the war on terror and to extend peace and freedom throughout the world. I'm here asking for your vote—I'm here in this vital State asking for the vote because I have a plan to continue to create jobs and, therefore, opportunity

throughout our entire country. I'm here to ask for the vote because I have a plan to rally—to continue to rally the compassionate spirit of the American people so every single citizen has a chance to realize the great promise of our country. When you give me 4 more years, America will be safer, America will be stronger, and America will be a better country.

A big issue for every family and a big issue in this campaign is the Federal tax burden. It's a big issue. By providing the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was the President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and to helping create jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Government could have.

Today I met Scott and Shelly Mueller and their children. They're from New Berlin. They've got four kids. The tax relief that we passed—and we raised the child credit and reduced the marriage penalty and created a 10-percent bracket and reduced all rates. Our view is if anybody pays taxes, all people ought to—if we have tax relief, everybody ought to get tax relief. That's what we thought. That's the fair way to do things. Well, the Muellers saved $2,700 on their taxes in '03. They'll save the same this year. And the reason I bring them up is oftentimes in Washington, they speak in terms of billions of this and billions of that, and we tend to forget what tax relief means for the families of America, what it means for the individuals. The $2,700 for the Muellers means a lot.

Here's what Shelly said. She said, "We used that money for home improvement projects." See, it's their home, and they're trying to improve their home. That's a positive development. She said, "We just couldn't afford these investment projects on our monthly budget. This is something we're counting on."

Tax relief matters to the people of this country. Oh, some of the sophisticates will say that $2,700 doesn't matter to the Muellers—it doesn't sound like a lot to me. It's a lot to them. That's what counts. And when they have more money in their pocket, the economy benefits.

When people fully understand what they did, they'll understand a big component of the tax relief was to encourage the growth of our small businesses in America. See, 70 percent of new jobs are created by small businesses. Therefore, the tax relief must address the needs of the small-business owners.

Today I met Kyle Stoehr. He's got a manufacturing company. His business is strong—at least that's what he told me, and I take him for his word for it. He said he hired seven new workers. See, that's what's happening all across the country. Small business after small business after small business is gaining confidence about the future, and they're putting people on the payroll. He's planning to invest $400,000 in software and machinery. Because of the tax relief, he's going to save $65,000 this year. See, that tax relief matters to small-business owners. It's helping the small businesses of the United States of America.

Steve Ziegler, he's the president of the InPro Corporation. He's a small-business owner. He makes architectural projects—products. He hired eight workers this year. He's planning on investing money; the tax relief has encouraged him to invest money. The reason I bring up these small-business owners is because it's not Government that creates wealth; it's the small-business owners that are expanding, that are creating the opportunity for Americans from all walks of life.

I don't know if you know this or not, but there are thousands of small businesses which pay tax at the individual income tax rate level. See, if you're a Subchapter S corporation or a sole proprietorship like most small businesses, you pay tax at the individual income tax level. And so when you hear them talking in Washington about running up those taxes, kind of taxing the rich, really what you need to be hearing is they're going to tax small-business owners. And that would be bad for this economy. Now is not the time to be raising taxes on small businesses or on working people in America. Now is the time to make sure we've got permanency in the Tax Code. Now is the time to make sure we don't ruin this economic growth by running up the taxes on the American people.

Tax relief is working. It's working. Since last summer, our economy has been growing at its fastest rate in nearly 20 years. As Tommy said, since last August we've added

1.5 million new jobs. People are going back to work. Here in Wisconsin, the unemployment rate has dropped to 5.1 percent. Homeownership rate is at an alltime high. That's a fantastic statistic, isn't it? We want more people owning their own home. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of the United States of America.

Interest rates are low. Business investment is growing. Consumer confidence is at a 2-year high. Personal incomes are up. The economic stimulus plan that we worked with Congress on is paying off. This economy is strong, and it is getting stronger.

And there's a different view, of course. That's what campaigns are all about. My opponents looked at this progress and somehow concluded the sky is falling. It doesn't matter whether their message is delivered with a frown or a smile, it's the same old pessimism—same old pessimism. And they're going to cheer us up with higher taxes—[*laughter*]—more Federal spending, and economic isolationism. The good news is, we're not going to let them do that. We're going to keep taxes low to make sure people can find work and people to be able to realize their dream.

We're going to continue to bring fiscal discipline to Washington, DC. See, it starts with understanding that we're not spending the Government's money; we're spending your money. And we must be good stewards with your money in the Nation's Capital.

I hear it all the time that small-business owners are very worried about some things, and so am I. We got to solve these problems to make sure people can find work. I want this economy not only to be strong today, I want it to be strong 10 years from now. I want this to be the best place in the world to do business so people can find good, high-paying jobs.

We've got to do something about these frivolous lawsuits. You cannot be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent has made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. [*Laughter*] I made my choice: I will continue to push Congress to reform the laws of America to end these frivolous and junk lawsuits that make it hard for small businesses to grow their businesses.

Tommy mentioned we've got a plan for better and affordable health care for the American people and for the small-business owners of America that includes association health plans and tax-free health savings accounts. Now, I agree with Tommy. In order to make sure you've got good doctors here in Wisconsin practicing their healing, in order to make sure health care is affordable, we need medical liability reform. We need the Federal Government to make sure that people can have their day in court, but we've got to stop these lawsuits that are driving docs out of business. It's in your interest. It's in the people's interest that we get this done.

Listen, in order to make sure this economy is a place where people can find work, we need an energy plan. I submitted one to the United States Congress. They need to pass that to my desk. It calls for modernizing the electricity system. It calls for the use of alternative sources of energy. It encourages conservation, but we can explore for energy in environmentally friendly ways. For the sake of economic security, for the sake of national security, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I know we've got some farmers here. Listen, our farm economy is strong, and I intend to keep it that way. That's a good sign for States like Wisconsin. The farming families of this State are making a good living, and one of the reasons why is because they're selling Wisconsin products overseas. If you're good at something, we want people buying it. We're real good at growing things. We're very good at making things. I'm a person who believes that we ought to be opening up markets, not closing markets. Just listen, my view is, give our workers and farmers and entrepreneurs a chance to compete, and we can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime.

There's a clear difference in this campaign on how to make sure this is a good place for people to find work. If you reelect me, I'll continue to pursue a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-farmer, pro-small-business agenda, and America will be better off for it.

Our future also depends on our willingness to lead in this world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong. But we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded but not

broken. Terrorists continue to attack in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness and uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. After the attacks of September the 11th, I resolved and this Nation resolved to bring justice to the terrorists, no matter where they dwell. We resolved to hold regimes that hide and sponsor terrorists to account. We made that resolution. And when you say something, you better mean it. In order for the world to be peaceful, when you say something, you better mean it. And I meant what we said. Afghanistan was a terrorist state. It was a training camp for Al Qaida killers. Because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy, Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror, and many young girls now go to school for the first time.

Iraq, only last year, was controlled by a dictator who threatened the civilized world. It's important for our fellow citizens to remember, he used weapons of mass destruction against his own people. For decades, he has tormented and tortured the people of his country. Because we acted, Iraq today is a free and sovereign nation. Because we acted, its dictator now sits in a prison cell and will receive the justice he denied so many for so long.

September the 11th, 2001, taught us a lesson we must never forget. It's a lesson I'll never forget. And it's this: America must confront threats before they fully materialize, before it's too late. That's the lesson that we must never forget as a nation. And so, remembering that and remembering the past of the dictator, we looked at the intelligence, and we saw a threat. Now, the United States Congress, including members of both political parties, looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat.

I went to the United Nations and said, "For years, you've passed resolutions, and for years, the dictator in Iraq has ignored the resolutions." I said, "Why don't we work together to pass a resolution and, this time, mean what we say." See, they had seen the threat. So on a 15-nothing vote, the U.N. Security Council demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs, or face serious consequences. And as he had for over a decade, the dictator deceived the world. The dictator chose defiance. It was his choice to make. He refused to comply. So I had a choice to make: Ignore the lessons of September the 11th and hope for the best, trust the word of a madman; or defend America. Given that choice, I will defend our country every time.

Although we haven't found the stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, we were right to go into Iraq, and America is safer today because we did. We removed a declared enemy of America who had the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction. He had that capability. And he could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. After September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

And we've got hard work to do there and important work to do there. Our immediate task around the world and in Iraq and Afghanistan is to bring those terrorists to justice. See, you can't talk sense to them. You can't negotiate with terrorists. You can't sit back and hope that somehow therapy will work and they will change their ways. [*Laughter*] That's just not the way it is. We must engage the enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq and around the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

We know these terrorists want to strike us again because they want to disrupt our way of life and spread fear. That's what they want to do. So we're doing everything we can to protect the homeland. You just need to know there are a lot of really decent, hard-working people that are spending hours on our mutual behalf to do everything we can to disrupt a potential attack. We're sharing intelligence like never before. We're running down every lead. And I know I speak for everybody when I thank the police and the firefighters and the emergency teams from the great State of Wisconsin who are serving as great first-responders.

We will stay on the offense. We'll protect our homeland. Yet, in the long run, our safety

requires something more. We must work to change the conditions that give rise to terror in the Middle East, the poverty and the hopelessness and the resentment that the terrorists can exploit. Life in that region is going to be far more hopeful and more peaceful when men and women choose their own leaders. It will be a much better place, a much more hopeful place when the people get to decide their own fate.

You see, by serving the ideal of liberty, we are bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we serve the deepest ideals of our own country because, you see, we understand that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world.

The world is changing for the better because of American leadership. Three years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Now, the terror camps are closed, democracy is rising, and the American people are safer. Three years ago, Pakistan was a safe transit point for terrorists on missions of murder. Now, we're working with the Pakistani Government to find those killers in remote regions of that country, and America is safer. Three years ago, Saudi—in Saudi Arabia, terrorists were not challenged by that Government. Today we're working with the Saudi Government, and the Saudi Government is running down Al Qaida leadership, and America is safer. Three years ago, Libya was spending millions of dollars to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Now, thousands of Libyan chemical munitions have been destroyed. Libya has given up its nuclear processing equipment, and America is safer. No, the world is changing for the better. Three years ago, the dictator in Iraq was a threat. He was a threat to us. He was a threat to the free world. He was a threat to the people in the neighborhood, and he was a threat to his own people. That dictator is no longer a threat, and the American people are safer.

I need 4 more years to complete the work. There's more to do to make America a safer place. There's more work to do to make the world a more peaceful place. We will finish the work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Listen, the good leaders have stepped up there, people who believe in the aspirations of their people. And we will support them. And the good people in those countries are taking more responsibility for their own security. They want to live in freedom. Their moms and dads want their children to be able to grow up in a peaceful and free society. They can count on us. That's what they need to hear. They need to hear from America they can count on the American people. You see, when we give our word, we keep our word.

I see people who proudly wear our uniform here, and I want to thank you for your service. At bases across our country and the world, I've had the privilege of meeting with those who defend our country and sacrifice for our country. I had the high honor of meeting those family members whose son or daughter paid the ultimate sacrifice. The best way to honor their bravery is to complete the mission and make sure America is safer and the world is more free.

Anytime we put our troops in harm's way, they deserve the best training, the best pay, the best possible support. That's why last September, I proposed what we call a supplemental funding request to support our military in its mission. That's more money for the troops, money that would help pay for body armor or vital equipment or hazard pay or health benefits, ammunition, fuel, spare parts. It was money to support them.

In the Senate, only a small, out-of-mainstream minority voted against the legislation. Two of those twelve Senators are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, when Senator Kerry tried to explain his vote, here's what he said. He said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] End quote. It sure doesn't clear it up, does it? [*Laughter*] Now he's offering a different explanation. Earlier this week, he said he is proud he and his runningmate voted against the funding for our troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. No, he's entitled to his view, but here's mine: Members of Congress should not vote to send troops into battle and

then vote against funding them. As the Commander in Chief of this great military, I will see to it they have what is needed to complete their mission.

We are leading the world with confidence and moral clarity. And we're calling on other nations to help us. There are over 60 nations involved in the Proliferation Security Initiative, nearly 40 nations in Afghanistan, over 30 nations in Iraq—countries committed to the same thing we're committed to, our own security through spreading democracy and peace and freedom. Over the next 4 years, I will continue to build coalitions to make the world a peaceful place. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other foreign countries.

This Nation is prosperous and strong, yet, we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the character of our citizens. The true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. The other day my opponent said that a bunch of entertainers from Hollywood conveyed the heart and soul of America.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. No, I believe the heart and soul of America is found in places in Wisconsin, in places just like Waukesha. Our Nation is strong because of the values we try to live by, courage, compassion, reverence, and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for high standards in our public schools. We stand for local control of our public schools. We stand for accountability in our public schools so no child is left behind in America. We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity in their lives. We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of society. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters. We stand for judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law, instead of legislating from the bench. We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing.

We stand for a culture of responsibility. The culture of this country is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in a life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period where the stakes are high, the challenges are difficult, a time when firm resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'm never going to forget that moment. There were workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember looking in the eyes of either a policeman or firefighter, and he said, "Do not let me down."

Like—as we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of the American people, whatever it takes.

I've also been witness to the great character of this country. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. And we've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most. We will need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the

world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every part of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our blessed country, the best days lie ahead.

Thanks for coming. God bless. May God bless you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. at the Waukesha County Exposition Center. In his remarks, he referred to James R. Klauser, chair, Wisconsin Leadership Team, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Mary F. Buestrin, national committeewoman, Republican Party of Wisconsin; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Exchange With Reporters in West Bend, Wisconsin

July 14, 2004

Purchase at Mike's Candyman

The President. This is spectacular, thanks.

Q. What are you getting there?

The President. I'm just getting, you know, about 400 calories a pop.

Q. I thought you gave up on the sweets, sir.

The President. Well, I'm confronted with excellent sweets. I'll be biking this weekend, in other words. Are you a biker these days?

Q. I'm ready to go.

The President. You are? Record that. [*Laughter*]

Employee Dot Bradley. You will enjoy these thoroughly. They're wonderful. Just for the President.

The President. I'm looking forward to it. How much do I owe you?

Owner Davey Bartlett. They are free.

The President. No, they're not free.

Mr. Bartlett. Okay, $5.28 with tax.

The President. How's your business doing?

Ms. Bradley. Wonderful.

Mr. Bartlett. Seventy-two cents is your change.

Ms. Bradley. So good to meet you.

Mr. Bartlett. Nice to meet you.

The President. Appreciate you, candy man, great to see you all. Thanks for saying hi. Good to meet you.

All right, listen, buy something here. [*Laughter*] Here's how the economy works. You're overpaid. My tax relief has left more money in your pockets to spend here.

Q. Can you spot me $5? [*Laughter*]

The President. Thank you all. Hey, Tommy—you remember Tommy.

Ms. Bradley. Yes, hi, Tommy.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson. It's always good to see you.

The President. Thank you all. Is anybody going to buy anything here? I'm trying to drum up a little business. [*Laughter*]

Q. As long as you don't leave us behind.

The President. Leave no reporter behind. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:12 a.m. in the Mick's Candyman store. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Discussion in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

July 14, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you. Please be seated. Thanks. Thanks for coming to say hi. Thanks for having me. It's great to be here in Fond du Lac. We're here—I'm going to talk about how I intend to make sure America is a safer and stronger and better country. That's what I want to talk about today. Tell you why we're here at a business, it's because this is a business that is successful. And I'm going to talk about why I think it is successful.

But I also want to answer some of your questions too. So I'll try to keep my remarks relatively short—which is kind of hard to do. [*Laughter*] First, I regret that Laura is not traveling with me.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. I know it; yes, most people react that way. [*Laughter*] It's kind of like, why didn't you stay home and let her come instead? [*Laughter*] I'm a lucky man that—you know, she was a public school librarian in Midland, Texas. And I asked her to—when I asked her to marry me, fortunately, she said yes. And she's a great First Lady. She's done a terrific job. You know, I like to tell people

that perhaps the best reason to put me back in there is so she'll have 4 more years as the First Lady. I'm sorry she's not with me. I love to campaign with her, but, fortunately, one of our daughters, Barbara, is traveling with me today. I want to thank you for coming, Barbara. Thanks for coming. Go ahead and stand up. Thank you. It's truly a lot of fun to travel your beautiful State on a bus and have Barbara by my side.

I also want to thank my friend Tommy Thompson for serving our country so well. Thank you, T. [*Applause*] They still remember you. [*Laughter*] He's done a great job. I've given him a tough assignment—I mean a really tough assignment—and he has done it with a lot of class and dignity. I like to say the people of Wisconsin trained him well. [*Laughter*] But thanks for your service, T. I appreciate it very much.

I want to thank the Colwins and all the folks here at Mid-States for inviting me. It's kind of a pain to have the President come. [*Laughter*] The entourages seem to be a little bigger as time goes on, and I know it's hard to accommodate the crowd. But thank you a lot. I hope our people were polite. Yes, I hope so, because if not, they're not going to be working for me. But thanks for your hospitality. We'll talk a little bit about Joe's business here in a second. I particularly want to thank the employees for giving us a little time and space here to visit about issues that matter to the country.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists who are here. Those are the political people who do your duty. We have a duty in this country to vote. And I want to thank you for encouraging people to vote. Thank you for registering people. Thank you for garnering the vote and turning it out. And when you get them to turn out, you might kind of give them a nudge our way. [*Laughter*]

I've got some things I want to do. I'm here in this State asking for the vote. There's more to do to make sure America is a safer place and a stronger place and a better place.

My biggest job is to make sure America remains a safe place. That's the most important responsibility I have as your President. And it's a task at hand because we face an enemy which has a dim view of the world, and it's an enemy which hates America because of our love for freedom. These are people that you just cannot reason with. You can't negotiate with them. Therapy is not going to work with them. [*Laughter*] They're coldblooded people. That's the way they are. And we have a solemn responsibility to the American people to bring them to justice. We must deal with them in foreign lands so we do not have to face them here at home. That's our job. That's our responsibility. That's our most solemn duty, is to protect the homeland.

I want you to know there are a lot of good people working hard to protect America. You've heard about the threats. They're real. These people are—these people are still—lurk. And we've got to be correct 100 percent of the time in America, and they've got to be right once. That's the challenge at hand. And we got a lot of really good people—I mean good people—working hard, long hours to run down any threat, to uncover suspicious activities to protect us. And I know you'll join me in thanking the first-responders all across this State and all across our country, our police and fire and emergency teams.

And the best way to protect America is to stay on the offense and use every resource we have at our disposal to bring people to justice. That's the short-term strategy. And that's what we're doing, and that's what I will continue to do as your President. I'm not going to be shaken. I'm not going to have my vision clouded. I know exactly the job we need to do.

About two-thirds of known Al Qaida leadership has been brought to justice. And that's positive, and that's good news. There's still others that are out there. And that's why we're working with other nations to share intelligence, to cut off their money, and to get them, bring them to justice.

Now, the other thing about being the President is when you say something, you better mean it. One thing that's important about this job—so when I said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist," I meant it. In other words, part of making America is secure is to deny the terrorists safe haven. And that's why I said to the Taliban—those are the folks that were running Afghanistan at the time—"Give up

your—give up Al Qaida. Get rid of the terrorists camps." They defied us. And so we sent a coalition of troops led by a fantastic United States military to liberate the people of Afghanistan.

It's hard work. It's not easy work. But America has done hard things in the past. And this is necessary work. And I want you to think about Afghanistan today, 3 years—compared to what it was 3 years ago. Three years ago, we had people living in a country run by barbaric, dim-viewed ideologues, so backwards that they wouldn't let young girls go to school; so backwards that they would whip women in public; so backwards that if you had a view different from their own, you would face serious consequences. That's the country—and so weak that they were becoming infested by Al Qaida.

Today, Afghanistan has got a strong President. They're going to have elections this fall for the Presidency. Young girls are going to school. The country is being rebuilt. And we've got an ally in the war on terror.

Another lesson of September the 11th is that this country must deal with threats before they fully materialize. In other words, before, we could say—before September the 11th, it was assumed that when we saw a threat, you know, we may have to deal with it, may not have to deal with it, because we never dreamt the threats would actually come to our own homeland. Now, we know the nature of the enemy, and we know the capacity of the enemy. And therefore, when we see a threat, we've got to deal with it.

First choice is diplomatically. That's the first choice the—any President must do—is say, "Let's see if we can't convince a country, for example, to change its ways." I saw a threat in Iraq. I'll tell you why I saw the threat in Iraq. First, they had a leader that hated America, a declared enemy of this country. Secondly, they had attacked their neighbors. Thirdly, they had used weapons of mass destruction on their own people. Fourthly, there were terrorist connections inside of Iraq. I mean, there was terrorist organizations. For example, Abu Nidal was a known terrorist, and his organization found safe haven there in Iraq, as has other people. A guy named Zarqawi, whose name is in the news—there was a car bomb today in Baghdad. I suspect Zarqawi ordered it. I don't know, but that's the nature of Zarqawi. See, he'll kill anybody, anywhere, anytime to try to create fear and confusion.

At any rate, we looked at the intelligence presented to us, and we saw a threat. Now, I want you to remember that the United States Congress looked at the very same intelligence—members of both political parties looked at the intelligence, and they saw a threat. We remember the lesson of September the 11th. We knew threats must be dealt with before they fully materialize, and we saw a threat. The U.N. Security Council looked at the same intelligence, and it saw a threat.

Now, you might remember, in September of 2002, I went to the United Nations. I said, "You've called the man a threat over and over again. You've had resolution after resolution after resolution after resolution. We hope you don't become an empty debating society; we hope your word means something." So—and they listened. And we passed another resolution on a 15-to-nothing vote. In other words, nations of the world came together and said to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." And that's the history. In other words, we put together a—we tried to convince him diplomatically. So the word spoke—world spoke, and we said, "Let inspectors go in and see whether or not he's conforming to the request of the free world." And history has shown that he was deceiving. There was a systematic deception, campaign of deception going on. In other words, we knew that he was deceiving the inspectors, and we wondered why. What did he have to hide? What did the man who had used weapons of mass destruction, what did the man who declared his hatred for America, have to hide?

In other words, I had a choice to make at this point in time in history: Do I forget the lessons of September the 11th and hope for the best? Do I trust the actions of a madman? Or do I take the action necessary to defend America? And given that choice, I will defend our country every single time.

It's been hard work. It's been really hard work. And we've lost brave troops, and we mourn for every troop. And in order to make

sure that those who have sacrificed for a better world and a safer America, to make sure their sacrifice means something, we will complete our mission in Iraq. Because a free Iraq is in this country's interests. A free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East is in the interests of the United States of America. It's in our security interests that freedom take hold in a part of the world where there's hopelessness and resentment, the ingredients necessary for the enemy to attract terrorists, killers. That's what we want.

See, the long-term solution in this fight against an ideology that is opposite of ours is to spread democracy and freedom. That's the long-term solution. And that's what you're seeing taking place. The world is changing because of the leadership of the United States of America. Think about the world 3 years ago. Afghanistan was troubled; it's now free. We got a great leader in Iraq named Prime Minister Alawi. He's a tough guy. And he believes in the hopes and aspirations of the Iraqi people. And Iraq is going to be a free society, and what an example that will serve. Imagine people looking—in the neighborhood and saying, "Gosh, they actually listen to what I think. I have a chance to raise my child in a relatively peaceful society. I don't have to be brutalized by a tyrant all the time."

Let me tell you this quick story about why I feel so strongly about what we have done and we're doing. Seven men came to see in the Oval Office. First of all, coming into the Oval Office is a pretty powerful experience. And it's such a nice place, I'd like to stay there for a while. [*Laughter*] Anyway—you know why? You can get positive things done for the country and the world. That's the only reason to hold the office, is to lead the country toward a better tomorrow.

Anyway, these guys come in—seven of them—all seven had had their right hands chopped off by Saddam Hussein. You know why? Because his currency had been devalued, and he needed somebody to blame. That's what tyrants do. And he blamed these seven small-business men. You say, why these seven? Well, I'll tell you. One guy, for example, sold dinars to get dollars to buy gold so he could make jewelry. And so I guess they must have looked at who was selling Iraqi currency to cause this—to blame the people for the cause of the devaluation. Anyway, not only were their right hands cut off, they had X's in their heads carved by their—by the Saddam boys.

Fortunately for them, there was a movie made about their plight, and the movie was seen by a guy in Houston, Texas, named Marvin Zindler, Big Two News. He was—if you've ever lived in Houston, you can't escape Marvin Zindler. He's a great American, is what he is. He's a news guy who started a foundation at some point in his career to help others. And he flew them to Houston, Texas, and they had new hands fitted, the latest prosthesis. And they're coming, now, to the Oval Office. And they walk in this fantastic place. I mean, they were overwhelmed with emotion. A guy said, "Thank you." I said, "You don't need to thank me. You need to thank the American people; that's who you need to thank. You need to thank the people that understand the great power of freedom and liberty to transform lives."

It was a wonderful contrast, wasn't it, the contrast between a compassionate nation that believes in the worth of each individual as opposed to a nation run by a tyrant who's willing to chop somebody's hand off because he had a bad day. And that's what we've changed. We've changed that dynamic in the world. People in that part of the world are going to see a hopeful tomorrow when they see a free Iraq emerge. Three years ago, nobody would have dreamed that a democracy would be rising in Iraq. Today, a democracy is rising in Iraq, and America will stand with those democrats until the job is complete.

Just a couple of other points I want to make to you about how this administration is leading the world to make it a safer place for all of us. Pakistan was a place where terrorists could—where they had—Pakistan was the only country, by the way, that recognized the Taliban at the time, and Al Qaida could move freely throughout Pakistan. This is 3 years ago. Today, the Pakistan Government is determined to rout out Al Qaida out of their country. We've got an ally in the war on terror in Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia—there wasn't much pressure on Al Qaida 3 years ago. Today, Saudi Arabian Government is focused on making sure

the Al Qaida leadership and other terrorists are brought to justice. They're now an ally in the war on terror.

Libya—Libya was a country which had terrorist ties and was developing weapons programs, which we discovered, and made it clear to the Libyan leader that there was a better alternative to developing weapons of mass destruction. Because the United States speaks clearly and means what it says, he got the message and is now disarming. As a matter of fact, I was in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the other day looking at a lot of the processing equipment we had brought back to the United States of America. Three years ago, Libya was dangerous. Today, Libya has disarmed.

No, the world is changing because the United States of America is leading. And there's more to do. There's more work to be done. If you give me 4 more years, America will be a safer place because the world will be a freer place. I'm running again because I want America to be a stronger and better country as well.

Let me start first with "better." We're a better country when we educate every child. The No Child Left Behind Act is a great piece of reform. It said we'll spend more Federal money, but in return, we expect results. That seems like a reasonable thing to ask, isn't it? We want to know whether or not our children can read and write and add and subtract. That shouldn't be that hard a question. Are you able to teach a child how to read at the third-grade level, and if not, what are you going to do to change so that child can read at the third-grade level?

I'll tell you what we've done. We've raised the bar because I believe every child can learn to read and write and add and subtract. We're challenging what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. In other words, if you believe certain children can't learn, they won't. It's just as simple as that. If you've got low expectations, you're going to receive—you'll achieve mediocre results.

The No Child Left Behind Act has got great faith in the local folks to chart the path to excellence. It's got strong sense of accountability, and it raises the bar. A better America is an America in which every child receives an education early, before it is too late. It's precisely what this administration will continue to push for.

A better America is an America that understands the strength of the country is in the hearts and souls of the American citizens. That's where our strength lies. I've talked about our military; I'm going to keep it strong. You're about to hear me talk about our economy, which is strong and getting stronger. But that's not the true strength. The true strength of this country is the fact there are thousands and thousands of fellow citizens who love a neighbor just like they would like to be loved themselves, and it doesn't require a Federal law.

That's why my Faith- and Community-Based Initiative is a vital part of a better America. In other words, I need to be your President for 4 more years to continue to rally the armies of compassion, which exist all across the State of Wisconsin.

Let me give you an example: If you happen to be hooked on alcohol or drugs, you need help. And sometimes you can get the right help from a counselor, a government-sponsored counselor—nothing wrong with that, by the way. But sometimes—as a matter of fact, a lot of times, in order to change your ways, you have to change your heart. In other words, if you change your heart, you're more likely to change your habits. Government is not love. Government is law and justice. Love comes from our religious congregations of all faiths, people have heard the call to love a neighbor. And therefore, when we're talking about how to help people get off drugs or alcohol, this Government of ours and this country of ours must not fear welcoming faith-based programs into the delivery of services which will help lives. We ought not to fear faith in America; we ought to welcome faith. [*Applause*] Thank you. Thank you all.

Finally—I'm watching closely to make sure somebody doesn't fall out; I might get speaking too long—[*laughter*]. Finally, a stronger America starts with making sure we've got a place where people can find work—good, solid jobs. That's what a stronger America—when you hear me say "safer, strong, and better," I'm talking stronger—means a place where people can find a job and do their duty as a mom or a dad to provide for their family. That's what I'm most

interested in when I talk about stronger America.

We are a strong America. Let me tell you what we've been through. Let me remind you right quick. We have been through a recession; that's when things go backwards. Ask any small-business owner what it's like to try to run a business in a recession, and they'll tell you it's difficult. It's hard, hard work.

We start coming out of recession, and the enemy hit us. And it affected our economy. The attacks of September the 11th affected our economy. It just did. It affected our way of thinking about how we must defend ourselves, and it affected the economy. You might remember, banks closed down, airplanes couldn't fly. I mean, a lot happened that rippled throughout our economy, that cost people their jobs.

And then, just as we were recovering from that—listen, we are a resilient country, and the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well here, which I think makes us really unique in the world. And then we found out we had some of our citizens who did not tell the truth, some of our corporate citizens. And that shook us, make no mistake about it. When you're in an economy that requires good accounting—good, honest accounting—and you find out that some of them fudged the numbers, it affected our confidence. It just did. We passed tough laws. You're now seeing on your TV screens that people are now being brought to justice, because we're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America in order to make sure—[*applause*].

And finally, you heard me talk about the decisions I made in order to make America a safer place. When you hear on your TV screens, "America is marching to war," it's difficult to make investment. It's a negative thought. I know that. In other words, people need to be optimistic. If they're going to invest, they need to be optimistic. And it wasn't optimistic times for a while. I know that. But we've overcome all that. Why do I say that? Because our economy is growing, and it's growing strong. And right here in Wisconsin, you've got a 5.1 percent unemployment rate. That means people are working. That's way below the national average. This economy is ginning here. There's more to do, but it is strong.

I think one of the reasons why is because of the tax relief we passed. And we're going to talk about some of that tax relief right quick. Let me just remind you what was in the tax relief package. If you're—first of all, we said, "If you pay taxes, you're going to get relief." In other words, everybody that pays taxes should get tax relief. To me, that's the most fair way to do things, not try to kind of pick and choose winners in the Tax Code. The best way to provide fairness in tax relief is to reduce the rates of everybody who pays. And that's what happened, as you recall.

Secondly, we raised the child credit. If you're a mom or dad, you get a little extra tax relief. Thirdly, we reduced the marriage penalty. It's kind of a strange Tax Code that penalizes marriage. We're trying to encourage the opposite here in America. We want people to be married, and to penalize marriage doesn't make much sense.

We created a 10-percent tax bracket. We provide expensing deductions for new small businesses. In other words, we said, "If you invest, you get to write off more money." In other words, you save more money. We said to small businesses, "We want you to invest."

But I want you to understand something very important in this Tax Code, in these tax cuts. By far, the majority of small businesses pay taxes at the individual income tax rate. You see, they're called Subchapter S corporations. Like all the people who work here at Mid-States, you're working for a Subchapter S corporation. And they pay tax at the individual income rate. So do sole proprietorships. So when you hear me talking about cutting individual income taxes, we also cut the taxes on thousands of small businesses too. And you know why? Most small businesses create—most new jobs are created by small businesses in America. That's the reality. And therefore, if you want people going back to work, you've got to stimulate the small-business sector.

And now, Joe's business right here is a Subchapter S corporation. Joe, why don't you stand up again? He's the president and CEO. First of all, this is Joe's business. Now, you notice he said "associates," because he's a

great CEO. He makes sure everybody understands. But he's the guy that put up the money. That's what we want in America, by the way. We want people owning things. We want people owning their own homes. The homeownership rate in America is at an all-time high. That's fantastic news for our country. People own something, they have a stake in the future of the country.

And so, Joe, thanks for inviting us to your business. Tell us what you do.

[*At this point, the discussion continued.*]

The President. Let me tell you something. Why—why did you hire 73 people? Just to be a nice guy?

Joe Colwin. Because we're continuing to grow.

The President. There you go. The markets are growing. This is happening all across the country. Small businesses—did the tax cuts help? I'm kind of like a lawyer—I'm not one, you'll be happy to hear—nothing wrong with a good lawyer, don't get me wrong. I'm leading the witness. [*Laughter*] Did the tax cuts help? He's a Subchapter S corporation. In other words, we cut his taxes. Why? Because if he's got more money in his pocket, he's going to plow it back into the business, which means you're likely to keep your work. In this case, 73 more people found a job; that's what's important.

Mr. Colwin. Yes, sir. [*Laughter*] Pretty simple math.

The President. It helps. Tax relief helps.

Mr. Colwin. It does.

The President. Now, are you going to make investments this year?

Mr. Colwin. We're going to continue to make investments this year. We are going to make a minimum investment of $1.6 million in continued fabrication equipment. And in this room here, we are going to invest in excess of $6 million.

The President. Wow, that's good.

Mr. Colwin. And that's 14 million——

The President. Yes, let me explain what that means. See, that's really good news. But let me tell you what investment really means. He just said he's going to buy fabricating equipment.

Mr. Colwin. That's correct.

The President. Yes. Somebody has got to make it. See, when you hear him say, "I'm going to invest," that means he's purchasing something. And somebody has got to make that. One of your fellow workers is going to have to make that in another place, which means that person is more likely to keep a job. It may be a new hire, see. In other words, his investment may be that which is necessary for the person to hire somebody else. It may just be that extra product that this particular company has to make in order to meet his demand that encourages them to hire somebody else. I don't know who you're buying it from. It would be a good chance to put a plug in for them. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Colwin. It's all over—it's all over.

The President. Well, that's important. And see, what you need to hear—look at and think about is the amount of investment that's taking place in America, because there's a lot of decisionmakers like Joe. Joe just told us he's going to invest a least a million six in new plant and equipment. There's a lot of Joes all over America making that same decision. And that's how the economy grows. And the tax relief plan we passed said to Joe, "We're going to help you make the decision, because if you make the decision to buy plant and equipment this year, you get a little extra tax break." Isn't that right, Joe?

Mr. Colwin. That's correct.

The President. Now, you're supposed to be doing more talking than I am. [*Laughter*] It's your business. [*Laughter*] Let me tell you something. It's got to do your heart good to hear an entrepreneur who's confident enough to say, "I've hired people, and I'm investing." That's what we've got to hear. That's what's happening all over America.

Good job, buddy. Yes, sir. Thanks.

And so some questions you've got to ask in this campaign is, who understands that the role of Government is not to create wealth but to create an environment so small businesses grow? Now, you're going to hear talk in this campaign about, "Well, I'm going to increase the Federal spending, but don't worry, I'm going to pay for it by taxing the rich." We've heard that kind of language a lot in American politics. But I'm here for a reason. I want you to understand who "the

rich" is. It's the people who work in this company, because when you're talking taxing the rich on the individual income tax rates, you're raising taxes on Subchapter S corporations. And if this company has less money in its pocket, you're less likely to keep a job and have the benefits you expect for your families.

People need to be aware of this talk out of Washington, DC, that says, "Oh, don't worry, we're just going to tax the rich." That's not the way it works in the Tax Code. The big rich dodge taxes, anyway. It's companies like this who end up paying more taxes, and that would be wrong for our economy. We need to make sure these tax cuts we've passed are permanent and that Congress doesn't raise the taxes.

A couple other points I want to make about making sure Joe feels comfortable investing. We've got too many junk and frivolous lawsuits that threaten jobs in America. We need legal reform in this country, I'm telling you. Yes, the small-business people, what worries them—I'll tell you what worries them: trying to fight off a junk lawsuit in court. And Congress has got a role to play. We need class-action reform, for example. And yet, the Senate is controlled by the lawyers, and we can't get it out. I'm going to continue working for it. I think it's necessary to make sure this is a place for people to be able to find work, that is reform is necessary.

I'll tell you what else is necessary is medical liability reform. One of the things that—one of the—I hear it from small businesses all the time: "I'm having trouble making sure my people working with me get good health care." The costs are going up. That's why we've got what we call associate health care plans. This will enable people to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries so small businesses have got the capacity to buy insurance like big businesses do. In other words, if you're able to spread risk, you get a better deal for your employees. Or health savings accounts—these are tax-free alternatives to the Federal Government running the health care system, which I am absolutely against.

Let me tell you what else is a problem: these frivolous and junk lawsuits against the doctors. Listen, if you get hurt, you ought to have your day in court. Make no mistake about it. Nobody is saying you shouldn't. But when there's lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit by some lawyer trying to hit the jackpot, we've got a problem, because guess what's happening? These docs are having to pay higher premiums, which means you're having to pay higher rates. And a lot of docs have just had it. They're tired of practicing medicine.

There can be balance in the system. There can be fairness in the legal system. And you need a President who understands that. I'm going to continue to make—to battle for medical liability reform at the Federal level so people have got access to good and affordable health care.

Two other points I want to make, then we're going to talk to Tim Rice. Loosen up, buddy. [*Laughter*] Two other points. You can't run a business if you don't know if you're going to have reliable energy supplies. That's just the way it is. For this country to keep jobs here at home, we've got to make sure we're the best place in the world to invest capital and do business. And until we get an energy policy, there's going to be doubt in the minds of the investors. I'll tell you why. If you're a manufacturer and you're worried about the reliability of electricity, you're not going be confident in investing in the future. If you're worried about the cost of natural gas, it's going to make you less willing to invest.

I submitted a plan to the United States Congress that says we'll do a better job of conserving energy—and we need to do that, and we will—we need to look for alternative sources of energy, and we're doing that. And we need to make sure that we—but we need to make sure we use our energy sources at home in a wise way. We can burn coal in clean ways. We can explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. If we expect people to work here in America, if we expect for this to be a place where people are willing to invest capital, people like Joe, we need to have an energy strategy that makes us less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

And finally, I know there's a lot of talk about trade, and there should be. It's an important discussion. But let me remind you,

just to make sure you put the facts in perspective here, America has opened up its markets for years. Presidents from both political parties said it's a good thing for our consumers to have more products coming into the United States. You know why? If consumers have more choices, consumers are going to get better quality at better price. That's how the marketplace works. And so we've been a country that said, "Sure, come on, sell your goods here, compete." The more competition it is for your demand, the better deal you're going to get. That's just the way it is in the marketplace. "Please come and compete."

The problem is we haven't said the same thing to other countries. In other words, the job of the President—and this is exactly what I'm doing—is to say, "Our market is open. You open yours." All I'm saying is, give our workers and farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and entrepreneurs a level playing field, and we can compete with anybody, anytime, anyplace.

I'm running to make America a stronger place, and I've got a vision as to how to make sure this is the best place for the Joe Colwins of America to succeed and, therefore, his associates to succeed with him. That's what this is all about.

Now let me introduce you to Tim Rice. Tim, thanks for coming. Tim is a guy who works here at Mid-States, right? How long have you worked here for, Tim?

Tim Rice. I started in May, sir, following graduation from the University of Wisconsin.

The President. Congratulations on getting out of college. Barbara just graduated too.

Mr. Rice. Thank you, sir.

The President. He started in May. It's a pretty good sign, isn't it? The economy is growing; otherwise he wouldn't be starting in May. He might have been starting in May of 1997.

And so, what were you doing before?

Mr. Rice. Prior to that, I spent 4 years in the United States Air Force, active duty, and then went to school.

The President. Thanks, yes. I know I'm prying into your business, but are you making more money now than you were?

Mr. Rice. Absolutely. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's good. Like, one dollar more? Two times more?

Mr. Rice. Two times more.

The President. Yes, he's making two times more money. What he did was he got an education and found a higher-paying job. Let me tell you, the reason I want—this is an interesting story—is because there is a direct corollary between higher wages and education. We're going to talk about what it means to have—be retrained for the jobs of the 21st century in a minute. But it's essential for our country to understand that the job base is changing as our economy changes, and that requires people to get education. And one of the focuses of my administration has been and will continue to be to make sure people are trained for the jobs of the 21st century.

Now, Tim went back to college, a 4-year degree, and now he makes double what he was making before. People have got to understand that means he's a more productive worker, and he's ready for the new jobs. Let me tell you something about Tim. He saved $2,400 in tax relief in '03, 2,400 in '04—is that correct?

Mr. Rice. That's correct.

The President. And so, like, what are you doing with all that money? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Rice. I spent 7 years working and going to school before I graduated. I didn't see a lot of my family. I was able to take 3 months off of work before I graduated just to go to school and spend time with my family.

The President. That's good. If you're a dad, your most important responsibility is to love your children with all your heart and your soul. That's what he just told us, isn't it? I thank you for that.

Let me tell you something about this tax relief plan. The reason I've saved these examples for the end, it's important to know that parts of this tax relief are going to expire. And the reason I've asked Tim and Deb and others to come is because the Members of Congress and the Senate sometimes forget that when we're talking about tax relief, we're actually talking about it affecting people's pocketbooks in a positive way. See, I know that 2,400 doesn't sound like a lot to some of them in Washington. Ask Tim if it's a lot. I asked him. And he said, "You bet it's a

lot." And if they don't pass tax relief, his tax burden is going to go up by $1,100. In other words, that's $1,100 less money in his pocket for he and his family to decide what to do with it.

Here's what I think about tax relief. I think you set priorities. I think you're wise with the people's money. But I think you've got to understand that Tim can spend his money far better than the Federal Government can.

Thanks for coming. Go ahead. Thanks, Tim.

Deb Winterhack is with us. All right, Deb. Let her go.

Deb Winterhack. Hi.

The President. Married?

Mrs. Winterhack. Married.

The President. How many children?

Mrs. Winterhack. I have three, one in college, one on their way to college.

The President. See, I told her I thought she was fooling me when she told me. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Winterhack. Yes, well, I feel it. [*Laughter*]

The President. Are they here?

Mrs. Winterhack. No, they're at Williamsport Baseball Tournament.

The President. Really?

Mrs. Winterhack. Yes, starts today.

The President. You're a Little League mom?

Mrs. Winterhack. I'm a Little League mom.

The President. I was raised by a Little League mom. [*Laughter*] The difference is, is that my mother's hair turned white. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Winterhack. Mine probably did too. [*Laughter*]

The President. No, no. All right, tell us what you do and what you were doing. She works——

Mrs. Winterhack. I'm at—I'm an admissions director here at Fond du Lac at ManorCare, HCR ManorCare. Previously, I was a web technology salesperson in Beaverton, Wisconsin, so totally took my web technology to—totally out in left field to health care. So I just wanted to get into health care. I just loved it.

The President. Yes, let me tell you something about health care. I'm sorry to interrupt, and you can tell us how you got into health care. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Winterhack. That's okay.

The President. We haven't rehearsed this too well—[*laughter*].

Mrs. Winterhack. No, I just met him. [*Laughter*]

The President. She's doing the fox trot, and I'm doing the twist. [*Laughter*] Anyway—they still do the twist? [*Laughter*] I know, a little odd. There's a lot of jobs in health care. I remember going down to North Carolina where there's—where the textile industry reigned, and then the textile industry couldn't compete. People started losing jobs in the textile industry. But guess what happened? The health industry started to expand—better-paying jobs. And the challenge in this case in North Carolina and the challenge elsewhere is going to be to take people who have got one set of skills and train them for the jobs that now exist. That's the real challenge.

I am a big backer of the community college system in America. And I think we ought to help people go to community colleges to train for the jobs of the 21st century. Community colleges provide education that is accessible and affordable. And guess what happens at community colleges? They change their curriculum to meet the needs of the times. And that's what we're going to continue to use community colleges for in a wise way.

What happened with you?

[*Mrs. Winterhack made further remarks.*]

The President. See, a lot of corporations do the responsible thing and train people for the jobs—they took Deb—she was obviously a smart person and capable person and motivated person. What Government can't do is say, "Deb, go motivate yourself." That's up to you. That's something Government cannot do. She wanted to improve her salary.

Mrs. Winterhack. The salary went up quite a bit, so—well, $8,000. So that was a great jump for me.

The President. She became a productive worker for the jobs which now exist and are expanding. If people are looking for work, think about the health care industry. Now, you're going to have to go back and get some

schooling. But there's help all across our Government. There's all kinds of assistance to help people get reeducated, and that's a good use of taxpayers' money, by the way.

The thing about Deb is, is that—two things happened to her: One, she retrained and gets more money; and two, the tax relief came along, which means she's got more after-tax money in her pocket. She's got more of her own money to spend. And if Congress does not make the tax relief permanent, she's paying an increase of $900 next year, and that doesn't make any sense.

So thanks for coming. You got anything else you want to say? Here's your chance.

Mrs. Winterhack. Four more years. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's good. Thank you. Glad I called on you. [*Laughter*]

All right, we've got Mark and Wendy Bodden, the last family that's with us. Thanks for coming. We're honored you all are here. Who do you got with you?

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. The reasons I've asked the Boddens here—here again, this is an example of what I'm talking about, why tax relief matters. You see, a lot of times they throw around numbers in Washington, but they forget the stories behind the numbers. I've asked them to come because I want the Members of the United States Senate and the Congress to understand the effects of bad policy on these people. It's bad policy to be raising their taxes right now. You can find every excuse in the book, believe me—this needs to happen, that needs to happen, this, that, or the other. I think it's important that they have enough money so that they're able to realize their dreams.

It's not unrealistic. We've got plenty of money in Washington. Listen, we can reduce our deficit in half if we're wise—over 5 years—if we're wise about how you spend—we spend your money. We can reduce the deficit in half and still fund the war on terror and protect the homeland. We just can't meet every single political promise that people feel comfortable throwing out. And it's a dangerous time—it's an election year—and you're going to hear every promise in the book. That's what you're going to hear.

If these people saved—how much did you save in '03 and '04?

Mr. Bodden. I believe it was $1,700.

The President. Yes—$1,700 in '03, $1,700 in '04. Now, that's like extra money. So what did you do?

Mr. Bodden. Well, it's very important to us that our children attend a Catholic school for education, and we put it into tuition.

The President. Did you? Good. That's good.

Mr. Bodden. Very happy. Thank you for that.

The President. That's a wise use of extra money, isn't it, educating your children. By the way, if Congress doesn't respond, the child credit is going down, the marriage penalty is going up, and the 10-percent bracket is gone, which means these people are going to have to pay $700 additional tax. In other words, the tax burden goes up by $700. That doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense from an economic perspective. See, the more money you have in your pocket, the more you're going to spend. And when you spend it, you ask for an additional good or a service. You heard what Joe—Joe feels confident he's going to spend additional. So are other consumers with more money in their pocket.

It also doesn't make sense because these people are saving for their kids' education. They're paying for their kids' education. Congress must listen to the voices of people like Mark and Wendy. Got any voice to tell Congress? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Bodden. We appreciate the extra money. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes. Well, that's good. I want to thank you for coming. The reason I've asked these good folks to come—thanks for coming—is I just wanted to make it—I just wanted people to have a sense for why I made the decisions I made and ask Congress to join me—a sense for how to make America a stronger place. I understand how this economy works, and I've got great faith in the entrepreneurs and consumers of our country. And I believe that the consumers make better decisions, oftentimes, than the Government makes. And that's why the tax relief package came at the right time. And that's why it's important to reject raising taxes on people right now.

In order to make sure America is a stronger place, we've got to have good, sound tax policy. Joe needs certainty in the Tax Code. We need good legal reform, good health care, good trade policy. Most of all, you need to have a President who understands that the role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur and small-business man and farmer can flourish, and that is me.

All right, let me answer some questions. I hope you've got a sense that I want the job for 4 more years, and I've got a plan to make sure the country is safer, stronger, and better. That's really what I'm here to tell you, that I know where I want to lead this country.

Let me answer some questions, and then we're going to get back on the bus and take it up the highway. Who has got a question? Yes, sir. Yell it—oh, there's a mike.

USA PATRIOT Act

Q. The PATRIOT Act——

The President. PATRIOT Act.

Q. The PATRIOT Act is due to expire——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——coming next year. And I find that an important tool for protecting America. And in Wisconsin here, we have Senator Russ Feingold, as you're aware, the only Senator to vote against the PATRIOT Act. Wondering if you can tell us all here the importance of the PATRIOT Act and what we can do to help get that renewed.

The President. Let me—that's a great question. A couple of things that are very important for you to understand about the PATRIOT Act. First of all, any action that takes place by law enforcement requires a court order. In other words, the Government can't move on wiretaps or roving wiretaps without getting a court order.

Now, we've used things like roving wiretaps on drug dealers before. Roving wiretaps mean you change your cell phone. And yet, we weren't able to use roving wiretaps on terrorists. And so what the PATRIOT Act said is, let's give our law enforcement the tools necessary, without abridging the Constitution of the United States, the tools necessary to defend America.

Secondly, the PATRIOT Act now allows intelligence-gathering and law enforcement segments of the FBI to discuss cases with each other. You're not going to believe this—at least I didn't believe it—that the FBI, the branch involved with intelligence—in other words, who might be coming into the country, who might be—who somebody suspects might do us harm—could not discuss a case with the law enforcement division of the FBI. There was a wall between the two, which meant we could not share information, readily share information.

The most important way to protect the homeland is to be able to get good intelligence and share that intelligence with those responsible for protecting the American people. And yet, the laws prevented us from doing that. And the PATRIOT Act wisely broke down that law so that those people responsible for defending you or finding information to defend you can better do their jobs. This was a practical application of law that did not take anybody's rights away.

And the PATRIOT Act is indispensable for the defense of this country. You ask anybody involved with law enforcement; they will tell you that the law protects the constitutional rights of our citizens and, at the same time, enables them to better do their job. We need to have the PATRIOT Act renewed so that the people of America can be better protected by the hard-working folks of this country. I appreciate that question.

Yes, sir. It's going to be a duo. Why don't you both ask the questions at the same time, and I'll answer the one I want to. [*Laughter*]

Promoting Job Growth

Q. I'm wondering, when you're elected in November, how are you going to continue job growth over the next 4 years?

The President. Yes, I appreciate that. Were you asleep? No—[*laughter*]. That's an unfair question. No, I know. Good tax policy, fiscal discipline in Washington, DC, fair trade policy, legal reforms, good health care policy, and job training is the best way to make sure America is a place where people can find a job. That's what you've got to figure out—how to create the environment for job growth and opportunity so people can find work.

Okay.

Support for U.S. Troops/War on Terror

Q. Small-business owner, entrepreneur, and an Army veteran, went to school with the G.I. Bill, put all—everything I learned in the Army into work, into the business. But it breaks my heart when I see all the soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq doing fantastic things, as you mentioned when you initially came out here—they come home, they put the television on, and they just see horrible news of what's going on, a completely different perspective of what they have done during their tour of duty. What can I do as an American citizen to show my appreciation? I tell them every single time, thank you for your service, whenever I see them in uniform. But what can I do to go that extra mile to show my appreciation to them?

The President. I appreciate you saying that. Look, the best thing you can do is what you're doing. And there are a lot of people like you who understand the stakes and the hard work. Thanks for saying that. And it's really to thank people in the uniform. It really is. It's—and you can't—I can't tell you how far that goes when you take time out of your life to say, "Thank you for your service." That's the best thing you can do. I could be self-serving—the best thing you could do is put me in again, but it's—but, no, I appreciate that spirit. And, listen, what's going to matter in the long run is that these troops come back and realize they've made a significant contribution to this country's safety and to peace and freedom.

Let me remind you all of something, speaking about what we're doing. You know, there were a lot of skeptics after World War II as to whether or not what America was doing would work. What we were doing was trying to rebuild Germany and work for democracy in Germany. What we were doing was trying to rebuild—or help Japan rebuild herself and there be a democracy there. After fighting these countries and after losing lives in a war against them, the United States of America—at least my predecessors—made the decision to rebuild those countries into democratic nations or at least to help them rebuild themselves. That was the decision we made. And there were a lot of skeptics. There were a lot of people who said it couldn't be done, the plans weren't working. And it took a long time, and it was hard, hard work.

You know, there were skeptics who said, "Well, the Japanese, they'll never be able to self-govern. After all, they're not Anglo-Saxon, or they're not Methodists, or I don't know." There was a lot of skepticism about whether they could self-govern. And there's still that skepticism today. There are some who I'm confident doubt whether or not a Muslim nation can self-govern. We don't doubt that in America. You see, we understand liberty. Thankfully, my predecessors did not fall prey to pessimistic attitudes after World War II, because today Germany and Japan are allies in the war on terror.

It came home to me very vividly when I was having dinner with Prime Minister Koizumi, who, by the way, loves Elvis—anyway—[*laughter*]. And so we were—guess what we were talking about? We were talking about how to keep the peace. The Prime Minister of a former enemy is sitting down with the President of the United States talking about how to keep the peace. Had my predecessors fallen prey to the pessimism about the ability of liberty to change societies for the better, I don't know whether I'd have been having that discussion. We were talking about Kim Chong-il in North Korea and the danger he poses to free societies in the Far East. That's because people after World War II had great faith in what America believes and what America stands for.

It's really important for the families of the service men and women overseas to hear the message that the work that their loved ones are doing are essential to America's freedom and to peace, to long-term peace, because free societies are peaceful societies. Free societies listen to the hopes and aspirations of the people. Societies which are not free are those which breed resentment and hatred, and it gets bottled up and sometimes it doesn't manifest itself overnight, but it will manifest itself. And now it's manifesting itself in the form of terror.

Now, let me—just one other thing I want to share with you, now that I got me going here. [*Laughter*] This is called a filibuster. Anyway—[*laughter*]—not really. Anyway, the battle is a battle of ideology. Think about

the Taliban. It's an ideology that is radical in nature, that doesn't believe in women's rights, human rights, human dissent, political dissent. It's dim. It is backward. These people have hijacked a religion. I don't think they're religious people. I don't think you order suiciders to kill innocent men, women, and children if you're a religious person. I think your heart has been corroded. But that's the—and the alternative of that is freedom. That's the alternative, is a free society.

Now, these radicals use terror as a weapon. They know our good hearts. They know America has a—a country of conscience. We're really decent people, very loving people. And they know we hate the death of innocents. But that's why their terror tool is so effective, because they'll kill anybody, anytime. See, they're trying to shake our will. That's what they're trying to do. They're trying to drive us from the world, because they want their dim vision of the world to spread.

They don't know our country. We will not be intimidated by these types. We will do our duty. We will remember the lessons of the past. And someday, an American President is going to be sitting down with a duly-elected leader of Iraq talking about how to keep the peace. And they're going to say thank God this generation didn't fold under pressure, had a clear vision.

All right, little guy, what you got? Here's your chance. You've got something for me?

Support for the President

Q. [*Inaudible*] I love you.

The President. I think he said, "Four more years." I'm not sure.

Yes, ma'am.

2004 Campaign

Q. Thank you for coming to Wisconsin, Mr. President. And we know that you're in a tough race for reelection, very, very tough, and the future of America is at stake. What can all of us here do to help you and Dick Cheney be sure to be reelected?

The President. Thank you very much. Listen, I'll tell you what you can do. Thanks. We are in a tough race, and that's okay. I like to get out and campaign. I mean, I think a good, healthy debate about vision and philosophy is important. And I think it's important for people to get out—outside of Washington and ask for the vote.

And that's what I'm doing now, and it's what I'm going to continue to do to election day. I've got the energy, I've got the drive, I've got the will to be your President. And I need your help. And the help you can do is register people to vote. And don't be afraid to find discerning Democrats and independents. There's a difference of philosophy that is emerging. People see a clear difference—clear difference of attitude, clear difference of vision, clear difference of how to get there. And register people. And then when we're coming down the stretch, get them to vote.

Listen, the race in 2000 in Wisconsin was very close, if you really think about it. Not many votes per precinct separated me and my opponent. And so, obviously, the more people per precinct we get to the polls, the easier it is to carry the State of Wisconsin, which is a crucial battleground State. It's a crucial State. I'm going to spend a lot of time here, thankfully. It's a good place to come. Thank you.

Yes, sir.

Energy

Q. Mr. President——

The President. I thought for a minute we had John Glenn here. [*Laughter*]

Q. You know what, Mr. President, I've been accused of that before. [*Laughter*]

The President. He's a good man.

Q. Thank you. You touched on energy a little earlier in your speech, and I'm just wondering what your views are on renewable energy such as ethanol, biodiesel, wind power.

The President. Yes, I may—when I talked about alternative sources of energy, that's what I was referring to. As a matter of fact, it is a grand vision to think about a President saying—reading the corn harvest and saying, "Oh, they're up, and now we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." I mean, it would be a fantastic moment for any President to know that we can grow our way out of dependence.

And I'm a believer in ethanol—said so in the 2000 campaign, and it's an integral part of the energy bill. And I'm for spending

money on research and development for biomass, and it makes sense. And maybe someday, wind energy will be competitive.

As a matter of fact, really what you're asking about is, can we—at least the way I put it is, can we manage our way through the short term until technology changes how we use energy? And I think we're talking about maybe a decade. Remember, I put out the hydrogen fuel cell alternative, asked for Congress to spend money for research and development. Someday, American automobiles will be powered by hydrogen. And that's going to be a fantastic change, which will make us less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We're in a transition period. Someday, hopefully, we'll find a better way to use nuclear power that people have confidence in. Someday, our clean coal technologies will give people more confidence in burning coal. In other words, we're making changes as to how we use energy and how we supply energy. And we're in a period of transition, and I believe technology is going to change. And the fundamental question is, are we able to grow our economy until it does? And I think we can do so in a balanced way.

But, no, I can't think of anything better for the future than to say, "Gosh, the corn crop is up, and now we have to buy less foreign sources of energy." But in the meantime, we're hooked. We import over 60 percent—or about 50-something percent of our energy supplies. And that means we've got to have a short-term energy policy that makes sense until technology changes.

And that's what you're seeing. You really are; you're seeing a changing world. And it's going to be an exciting time for people to be driving different kind of automobiles. It's just going to happen. It's just a function of when. And our job is to speed up the when by research and development money.

Yes, sir.

Visit to Fond du Lac

Q. Mr. President, on behalf of the city of Fond du Lac, I'm the president of the city council——

The President. Thank you, Councilman. Thank you for serving.

Q. We are totally honored to have you here today, and you're welcome back anytime you want to come.

The President. Thank you, Councilman.

Q. My question——

The President. I thought it was going to be the classic, like, where's the key? [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, we gave one to your dad when he was here in '92.

The President. That's why I'm asking, you know? [*Laughter*] I don't—I'm not sure the message.

Q. I wasn't on the agenda. I tried.

The President. Okay, good. [*Laughter*]

Insurance Costs for Small Businesses/ Health Care Reform

Q. My question is, I'm a commercial lender for a bank in Oshkosh, and I see a lot of small businesses' financials, and their biggest expense is the increase in insurance costs.

The President. Yes.

Q. Do you have anything in mind to reduce the medical insurance and other insurance costs going forward?

The President. Yes, I do. I mean, for example, you heard me explain the association health care plans. Now, what that means is, is that a company like Joe's can pool his risk with other like companies that exist in other States. You can't do that now. Like, if you're a restaurant owner here at Fond du Lac and you have 20 employees, you're now going to the marketplace and you've got to buy insurance for your 20 employees. And therefore, you're not able to pool risk. In other words, the more people you can—you insure, the better premiums you get because you're spreading risk.

And so we've got to let the restauranteur here or the Joes across the country pool risk. In other words, they can lump together as an association and then go to the insurance company and say, "Look, we've now got not 20 employees, insure a million employees." And that's a better way to be able to control risk than the alternative, which is to have the Federal Government try to control price, which means, they're the decisionmakers. You don't want that, believe me.

Secondly, we've got what's called health savings accounts. These are all set up for small-business owners, by the way, to make a better deal for their employees. You put money in tax-free; you accumulate money in the account tax-free; you withdraw it tax-free—all to pay ongoing medical costs, ordinary medical costs and, as well, is you buy yourself a catastrophic plan.

So, in other words, on an annual basis, you're contributing tax-free or the company contributes for the employee, so the employee is the decisionmaker. It's in the employee's interest that they make wise decisions. In other words, you don't want to purchase too much health care. In other words if you go to the doctor here, doctor there, doctor—into the office—so you start asking questions, "Do I really need this?"

And so the employee—the customer makes the decisions. The customer shops. And if you don't spend more than you put in, that's your money. You roll it over. So you've got catastrophic to take care of major medical expenses, and you've got tax incentives to encourage you to make the right decisions.

And thirdly, medical liability reform is the way to control costs.

Two other things I want to talk about. One of the things we've done is we've expanded what's called community health centers all across the country. These are very—it's a wise use of taxpayers' money. It's like primary care facilities for people who can't afford insurance. It takes people out of the emergency rooms and puts them into a primary care facility so they get the help they need.

And the other thing is—that Tommy and I are working on is we're trying to modernize health care, which is going to save people a lot of money. This is now—still a system in which people carry paper files from one appointment to the next. Sometimes they literally don't carry them, but your files are on paper. And it leads to medical error when things are handwritten, particularly if a doc has handwritten it. [*Laughter*] Or something is amiss in the files. And yet, most businesses these days are able to put their files on the—use the Internet to be able to have better efficiency with their files and paperwork, better cost savings when it comes to recordkeeping.

And so what Tommy and I are working on is what they call electronic medical records. Everybody is going to have an electronic medical record that you'll be able to carry with you, that you'll be able to send to whoever you want to send. It will cost—it will reduce cost in the health care system, and it will reduce errors in the health care system. And it makes eminent sense for the health care industry to get into the 21st century. It's stuck in the past.

So there are some—there are ways right there, practical ways to work on the cost of health care so that health care is more affordable to the small-business owners in America. And we're making progress. There's a battle in Washington; I readily concede it. And the battle is, do the consumers and docs make the decision, or does the Government make the decision? And it's a philosophical argument. And you know where I come down. I'm on the side of the consumers and the marketplace for best controlling the cost of health care.

Yes, you've got a question? Let her rip.

Right To Vote

Q. Okay. Hi, Mr. President.

The President. Hi.

Q. I'm 18, and this will be my first time I can vote.

The President. Okay, let me stop you right there. I'm the first guy to ask for your vote. [*Laughter*] Remember that when you get in the booth. [*Laughter*]

Q. All right, so this will be my first time being—Presidential voting. And I was wondering, since everyone has the right to vote, do you think there should be something so that everybody has to vote, so then you get more of a majority?

The President. Yes, no, I appreciate that. I just don't think it's going to work, you know, compulsory voting. I wish everybody would vote. But it's a right—it's a right. It's like the right to worship the way you want to worship. It's a right. I just don't think compulsory voting would work. I'm not sure what the penalty is.

I mean, it's—so, therefore, the thing we've got to do—thanks for bringing this up because it gives me a chance to remind people about their solemn duty, in my judgment, to go to the polls. Of course, I want everybody to be for me. I know it's not going to be the case, but I'm still urging people to vote. I want there to be widespread voter participation. It is—here we are working in Afghanistan, convincing the people of Afghanistan to go vote; we ought to be doing the same thing in our own country.

So I—both candidates—I'm confident my opponent is doing the same thing, and it's the right thing to do. Part of traveling the country is to say, "Listen, you have a duty. Get your neighbors to go vote. Please, go vote."

And so thanks for bringing that up. But, no, I don't see how you can get compulsory voting because I'm not sure what the consequences.

Yes.

Usama bin Laden/War on Terror/ Intelligence Capabilities

Q. Mr. President?

The President. Yes, ma'am.

Q. Do you have an updates on the whereabouts or possible capture of Usama bin Laden?

The President. Thank you for bringing that up. I tell you, if I knew, I wouldn't tell you. [*Laughter*] I'd be telling our forces which are stationed over there. He's on the run. He is, best guess, in the remote regions of Pakistan or Afghanistan, up there in kind of the—in the mountainous regions there, best guess. I really don't know.

I do know that the organization is—got the ability to kind of exist without his physical presence. In other words, there's command—there's commanders that are able to rise up even though we may capture a previous commander. Khalid Sheik Mohammed no longer is—somebody took his place. They tend to be decentralized at times. This guy, Zarqawi, operating out of Iraq, we call him an affiliate of Al Qaida. We're not sure he has sworn allegiance to Al Qaida, but he gets instructions from Al Qaida. They deal with Al Qaida. We've intercepted an e-mail, as you might remember, of Zarqawi to Al-Qaida-types in remote parts of Pakistan—I think it's where the e-mail came from. At any rate, it talked about how Zarqawi was to incite Shi'a-Sunni violence in Iraq so that a civil war would stop the advance of freedom. In other words, there was a dialog between the two.

My point to you is, is that there are these kind of loosely-affiliated cells along with direct chains of command that we're dealing with all over the world. And we've got a lot of intelligence cooperation. I mean, in order—this is a—I remember after September the 11th, this is a different kind of war. I remember specifically telling the country that. Sometimes you'll see action; sometimes you won't see action. It's a different kind of a contest. It requires good intelligence.

Let me talk about our intelligence right quick. Listen, I thought we would find stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction because the Agency thought we would. And we didn't. But what we have known and found is that Saddam Hussein had the capability of producing weapons. In other words, he had the capacity, and he was a sworn enemy.

And so the fundamental—listen, I'm—I know we did the right thing. We did the right thing for our security for the country. But the question the country must ask is, how do we make sure we have the best intelligence possible? That will be the next important discussion in Washington, DC. And I welcome it. Look, I want great intelligence. I can't do my job, we can't find people hiding in remote caves unless we've got good intelligence. That means more human intelligence; it means better electronic intelligence. We want to be able to listen to people better. It means to make sure there's better coordination inside Washington. And I'm convinced that out of the recent investigations will come a better system so that this President and future Presidents will be able to do as good a job as we possibly can for the American people.

Let me also remind you, however, that the CIA has had some great successes. Let me tell you one right quick, because I want the CIA agents who work for America to understand how much I appreciate their sacrifice and service and dedication. A.Q. Khan was

a citizen of Pakistan who was a prominent scientist. A.Q. Khan went in the business of selling secret nuclear information, know-how, processing, to countries like Libya, Iran, and North Korea. And we caught him. And we penetrated his network—we—these are brave citizens of the United States—penetrated his network and exposed it to the world. And one of the great proliferators of weapon of mass destruction technology is no long a threat to the United States and the free world. We've got some really good people working hard for the American people.

Yes. Go ahead and yell it out.

Minimum Wage

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Restaurant Group, of which we are—we have 370 employees throughout 10 restaurants. Senator Kennedy's minimum wage increase amendment that he's proposing is detrimental to small business. As a family-owned small-business owner, labor costs is one of our most—it's our most detrimental cost. And as labor costs go up, we are forced to cut jobs, raise prices, and it's a domino effect. I want to know your opinion on the minimum wage.

The President. My opinion is, is that I think there is a reasonable level to which we can raise the minimum wage and, at the same time, make sure small businesses are not penalized. And Mitch McConnell is working on such an idea on the Senate floor, and I'm going to continue working with Mitch.

No, I understand what you're saying. It's very important that we have a wage policy which does not price people out of jobs. And so I'm confident that if there is a minimum wage increase, it will, one, be reasonable, and two, will make sure small businesses aren't hurt.

Yes, sir.

Marriage/Education/Faith-Based Programs

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to thank you for making this country stronger and making me a better dad in helping to support my family as well.

The President. Thanks. Yes. You know what, I can't make you a better dad. That's up to you. Thanks for saying that, but it's really your job.

Q. I'd like to also thank your daughter for giving you up for 8 years.

The President. Thanks, yes. [*Laughter*] Thanks for saying that.

Q. I'm executive director of a faith-based organization, and we direct—try to redirect the lives of delinquent and at-risk youth from the inner city. And we get a lot of young men from Milwaukee. I want to thank you for your efforts and leadership on faith-based organizations, but particularly, we have a dear gentleman in this country, a comedian, Bill Cosby, who has really taken some leadership interest and throwing some different punchlines towards the community and the inner city and looking at the social culture of our cities. And as a compassionate conservative, I'd like to get your views and your vision on how to work with the social culture and lead that inner city into a brighter future.

The President. Yes, I think that, first of all, I believe that families are a very important part of a stable future. And I believe that it's very important for Government to promote and stand on the side of families.

You know, we're having a debate in Washington, and it needs to be a very sensitive, thoughtful debate as to the nature of family. I have made my position clear. I believe that a traditional marriage—marriage between a man and woman—is an important part of stable families. [*Applause*] Thank you. I, again, to repeat, I want this debate to be a thoughtful debate. It needs to be a sensitive debate. But I feel strongly about what I just said.

Secondly, the Government must work to strengthen family. Part of our welfare reform law was to encourage families to stay together. We put money aside—Tommy worked on this; it's a very important part of the law—to encourage people to stay together. Part of a stable society anywhere, whether it be in rural America or inner-city America, is for families to stay together.

Secondly, education. You know, a lot of inner-city schools are schools that, for some reason or another, quit on kids. They just shuffle them through. Maybe people said, "They're too hard to educate, therefore, let's just move them through." There's no doubt in my mind, when implemented, the No Child Left Behind Act is going to say to each child, "We believe in your worth. We believe

in your talents." There's extra money, by the way, for Title I kids. "We're raising the bar. We're going to measure to determine whether or not you've got the skills necessary to read and write and add and subtract. And if you don't, we'll correct them early." That's what the message is. I think that's going to help make inner city a much more hopeful place, just like it will make rural America a much more hopeful place.

Thirdly, many of the kids that you talk about need love. And I think it's the role of Government to encourage loving institutions to be more likely to interface with those who need help. What the—let me just tell you what it means. It means we're opening up Federal monies to grants to faith-based institutions. There was an argument in our country that said we couldn't do that, see. We couldn't do that. It would blur the line of church and state. Listen, I strongly believe in the separation of church and state. The church shouldn't be the state, and the state shouldn't be the church. On the other hand, I do think it's important for people in positions like I'm in to say, "Does the program work?" In other words, "Does it have a social objective?"—for example, mentoring kids who need help. They need love in their lives. That's an objective. And therefore, we ought to ask how best to achieve the objective. And if it's a faith-based program that is better able to do that objective, I don't see anything wrong with making Federal monies accessible to that faith-based program.

And it must be done—the program must be done without causing the program not to be able to practice its faith, see. How can you be a faith-based program if the Government says you can't practice faith? You can't be. And one of the interesting challenges we have faced is that faith-based programs were fearful of interfacing with Federal bureaucracies because the bureaucracies say, "Well, you can't have the Star of David on the wall or the cross on the wall. You can't have that." And so we have tried to change the culture in Washington.

So there are three practical steps there: strengthening families, better education, and then unleashing the great compassion to help people such as yourself save lives. And it's working.

Let me tell you something, the faith-based programs are beginning to take hold, and they're taking effect. We're getting more Federal money into the hands of the faith-based folks, what I call the social entrepreneurs, which are beginning to change people's lives in an incredibly positive way. And it's important to stay with the program because—as I can repeat; it sounds like a trite saying but it's not—the strength of the country is in the hearts and souls of the citizens.

There are a million kids whose mom and dad is in prison—a mom or dad is in prison. Those are kids who've got a future that may not look so bright to them. It can be brightened by love, I'm telling you. It can be brightened by a mentor. It can be brightened by somebody who comes in their life and say, "I love you, brother. What can I do to help you? How can I help you realize a better tomorrow?" Now, that sounds like a heavy lift—million mentors—but when you think about how many churches there are and synagogues there are and mosques there are and community programs there are, we're not talking about that many people.

And my job is to rally the people of the country and, at first, to understand the proper relationship between the Federal Government and the strength—you know, you hear people say, "Oh, the great strength of the country is our Government." No, that's not me. I don't believe that. I think Government is an indispensable part of our country, but the great strength is the people's hearts. And as your President, I will continue to call upon people to serve their country by loving their neighbor. That's one of my most important jobs.

Yes, buddy, last question. We've got to go up the road. A couple of questions. Fire away. Go ahead. Well, maybe they don't want you to ask the question.

Education

Q. Will you send more money for education——

The President. Send more money in education——

Q. ——to help the kids get their lives, to help them go to college and get the money to help the people?

The President. Yes. Very good. He wants to know about education funding. I think that's what it was, right? [*Laughter*] Or just money in general? Well, the best way to send money to the people is to let them keep their own money in the first place. We've increased Federal spending for elementary and secondary schools by over 40 percent since 2001, which is a hefty increase. In other words, we're doing our duty. What's changed is we've said now, "Show us whether or not the money is actually working." See, before we'd send money and then they wouldn't ask the question. Now we're asking that question, "Can a child read, and if not, why?"

In terms of Pell grants and education grants that help people, deserving people, go to college, we've increased that spending as well. We're doing our job. But I want to remind you when it comes to public education, the primary funder of public schools are the States and local jurisdictions. That's the way it has been in the past, and in my judgment, that's the way it ought to be. And the Federal Government can help with Title I students or IDEA funding, which is for disabled students. But it is the primary responsibility of your State government to make education the number one priority.

When I ran for Governor of Texas, I said education is to a State what national defense is to the Federal Government. The primary responsibility of the State is to make sure that the public school system runs well. And the primary obligation of the State is to fund the schools so they go well. And the Federal Government provides a complementary role. That's the way it is now, and that's the way it is, so long as I'm going to be the President.

One final question, and then I've got to hit the bus.

Public Service

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to welcome you to Wisconsin as well. And as an older mother of many children, we've tried to—we've had a number of kids that were interested in going into politics that were really turned off for a few years, but because of gentlemen like Tommy Thompson and yourself, we now have a son in politics, and we're very proud and also working for your benefit. Also, I heard you say that you'd like to return to Wisconsin. We have a great city about 40 miles from here, on the shores of Lake Michigan, Sheboygan, and we'd welcome you there with open arms.

The President. Thank you. Let me talk about service. Thanks for bringing it up. There's obviously a proud mom, and that's neat, that one of her children has chosen to go into public service. I encourage people to run and to go into public service. But I recognize not everybody is suited for it, and some people just aren't interested. But there's all kinds of ways to serve. It's just not—you don't have to be a candidate to serve. You can serve by loving your neighbor. You can serve by mentoring a child. You can serve your community by just walking across the street to a shut-in's home and saying, "What can I do to make your day better?" There are all kinds of ways to serve.

I'm proud of your son for running. I think it's great. It's very important for people to step up and put their hat in the ring and get out there and mix it up. It's an exciting life. I mean, it's a—you've got to have a Type A personality, I recognize, but—[*laughter*]. Let me tell you something. I enjoy it. I enjoy being with people. I love the people of this country, and I love being with you today.

Thanks for coming. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. in the factory at the Mid-States Aluminum Corp. In his remarks, he referred to President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal, who was found dead in his apartment in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 19, 2002; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and Khalid Sheik Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11 attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003.

Exchange With Reporters in Oshkosh, Wisconsin

July 14, 2004

President's Visit to Wisconsin

Q. Mr. President, your reaction to the crowds and the towns?

The President. Very, very warm and very hospitable reaction. A lot of people coming out, for which I'm grateful.

Q. What did you get?

The President. Vanilla custard. It's highly recommended. I'm recommending vanilla for Hillman [G. Robert Hillman, Dallas Morning News].

Q. You are dripping. You need a napkin.

The President. I'm going to get one in a minute. Would you like some?

Q. No, thanks.

The President. I'm trying to get you a little national publicity.

Q. I think I've got all I need. [*Laughter*]

The President. I enjoyed talking to you, girls. Enjoyed talking to you. Thank you.

All right, let's go back to work.

Q. First a candy store and now ice cream, sir?

The President. I'm loading up, carbo-loading for the weekend. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:50 p.m. at Leon's Frozen Custard. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Senate Action To Block a Constitutional Amendment on Marriage

July 14, 2004

I am deeply disappointed that the effort to pass a constitutional amendment affirming the sanctity of marriage as being between a man and a woman was temporarily blocked in the Senate.

Activist judges and local officials in some parts of the country are not letting up in their efforts to redefine marriage for the rest of America—and neither should defenders of traditional marriage flag in their efforts.

It is important for our country to continue the debate on this important issue, and I urge the House of Representatives to pass this amendment.

Statement on Congressional Passage of the "Project BioShield Act of 2004"

July 14, 2004

During this time of threat to the homeland, I commend Congress for passing the "Project BioShield Act of 2004." This legislation will strengthen our ability to protect Americans against biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological threats. It will speed the Government's ability to turn promising scientific discoveries into necessary countermeasures, provide for rapid stockpiling of critical new drugs and vaccines, and allow the Food and Drug Administration to make treatments available quickly to Americans in emergency situations. By bringing researchers, medical experts, and the biomedical industry together in new and innovative ways, we will not only help protect the homeland but also gain insights into other diseases. This will break new ground in the search for treatments and cures, while strengthening our overall biotechnology infrastructure. I look forward to signing this vital piece of legislation.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 15.

Remarks in Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin

July 14, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. Thanks for inviting me. It's good to be here in Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin. Thank you so much.

We've been having a great bus tour. I've been traveling all across this important State asking for the vote. I'm here to ask for your help. What a fantastic trip we've had. I did stop at Leon's Custard Shop. I also stopped in West Bend at Mick's Candyman Store. It's been a day of great excitement and high caloric intake. [*Laughter*] But I love being back here. It's good to see the Cheeseheads coming in. I know it's not the time of year, but I probably need to come back next fall, don't I? One thing is for certain: The Green Bay area is Bush-Cheney country.

I'm here to ask for your help. Give me 4 more years, this country is going to be safer and stronger and better.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I'm sorry Laura is not traveling with me today.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. That's generally the reaction. [*Laughter*] I interpret that to mean, "Too bad she didn't come and you didn't stay at home." [*Laughter*] I don't blame you. She's a fabulous woman. I'm really proud of her. She's a wonderful First Lady. I'm going to tell you what I intend to do for 4 more years, but perhaps the best reason to put me back in is so she'll be the First Lady for 4 more years. Fortunately, however, a member of my family is traveling with me today. I want to thank one of our daughters, Barbara, for coming today. Thank you for being here, Barbara.

I'm also traveling today with a great American, a person who served our country so well in my Cabinet, and a person you trained very well as your former Governor, and that's Tommy Thompson.

You've got a really fine Congressman from this area. Congressman Mark Green is a decent, honorable man. And I appreciate his wife, Sue, joining us today. Thanks for coming, Sue. I'm glad you're here.

State Treasurer Jack Voight is with us as well. I want to thank the mayors who are here. I want to thank those who serve at the State level and at the local level for your willingness to serve your communities. I appreciate so very much the grassroots activists who are here.

I'm going to thank my friend Dennis Miller, who's joined us today. I appreciate my friend Wayne Newton for joining us today. Thanks for coming. I know Brian Noble is here. Thanks for coming, Brian. I appreciate you being here to help warm up the crowd.

But most of all, I want to thank you all for being here. It means a lot. I need your help. They have a—get on the web page and call up georgewbush.com. It's a place where you can find out how to volunteer to turn out the vote. Get your neighbors to register. We have a duty in this country to vote. Gather the people up and encourage them to do their duty. You might suggest they vote Bush-Cheney while they're heading to the polls.

And when you're gathering up that vote and when you're talking to your friends and neighbors, tell them that this administration has faced serious challenges over the last 3½ years, and we've given serious answers.

We came to office with the stock market in decline and an economy headed into recession. We acted. We delivered historic tax relief, and over the past 3 years, America has had the fastest growing economy of any major industrialized nation.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning. We pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We have captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network. We will stay on the hunt until justice is done.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We acted against two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We have liberated 50 million people. Today, America is proud to lead the armies of liberation.

I'm running with a great American in Dick Cheney. He's a solid, solid citizen. And when he and I came to Washington, the military was underfunded and underappreciated, so we gave our Armed Forces the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

These accomplishments are important to the security and prosperity of our country. You see, it's the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. The President has to make hard decisions and keep his commitments. And with your help, that is how I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I'm looking forward to the race. I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to taking our positive and hopeful message all across the country. And it's going to be a tough race.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*] [*Laughter*]

The President. My opponent is an experience United States Senator. He's been in Washington a lot longer than I have.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. No, he's been there long enough to take both sides of just about every issue. He voted for the PATRIOT Act, for NAFTA, for the No Child Left Behind Act, and for the use of force in Iraq. Now, he opposes the PATRIOT Act, NAFTA, the No Child Left Behind Act, and the liberation of Iraq.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If you disagree with the Senator on most any issue, you may just have caught him on the wrong day. Recently, in the Midwest, he even tried to claim he was the candidate with conservative values.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I know—I know. [*Laughter*] That's what he said. [*Laughter*] It's kind of hard to square that with his previous statement when he said, "I'm liberal and proud of it." [*Laughter*] Now he has a runningmate. Senator Kerry is rated as the most liberal Member of the United States Senate, and he chose a fellow lawyer who is the fourth most liberal Member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In Massachusetts, that's what they call balancing the ticket. [*Laughter*]

Great events will turn on this election. The person who sits in the Oval Office will set the course on the war on terror and the direction of our economy. I'm here asking for the vote and your help because I have a vision and a strategy to win the war on terror and to extend peace and freedom throughout the world. I'm asking for the vote because I have a plan to continue to create jobs and opportunity for every single American. I'm asking for the vote because I have a plan to continue to rally the compassionate spirit of America, so every single citizen has a chance to realize the great promise of our country. I'm asking for the vote because with your help, America will be safer and stronger and better.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. A big issue for every family is their tax burden. By providing the largest Federal tax relief since Ronald Reagan was President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and helping create new jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Federal Government would have.

Our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. Since last summer, our economy has been growing at its fastest rate in nearly 20 years. In less than a year's time, we have added more than 1.5 million new jobs. Here in this great State, your unemployment rate has dropped to 5.1 percent. The manufacturing sector is growing stronger, with 64,000 new jobs created since January. Homeownership rate is at an alltime high. Business investment is growing. Consumer confidence is at a 2-year high. Personal incomes are on the rise. The tax relief we passed is working.

My opponents look at all this progress and somehow conclude that the sky is falling. [*Laughter*] But whether their message is delivered with a frown or a smile, it's the same old pessimism. And to cheer us up, they propose higher taxes——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——more Federal spending——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——and economic isolationism.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The surest way to end economic growth and put Americans out of work is their plan. The Nation is on the path to progress and opportunity, and we're not going backwards.

To sustain economic growth, we need to keep taxes low. Higher taxes would now undermine growth and destroy jobs. To help grow the American economy and create more jobs for American workers, I've got a better idea than my opponent's plan: Congress needs to make tax relief permanent and not raise taxes on the American people.

In order to make sure our economy continues to grow, we've got to be smart about how we spend the money that you send to Washington, DC. We need fiscal discipline. We need to make sure Congress doesn't overpromise and underdeliver. It all starts with understanding whose money we spend

in Washington, DC. It's not the Government's money we spend; it's the people's money we spend in Washington, DC.

In order to make sure people can find work and people are willing to invest so small businesses can thrive and grow, we need to stop frivolous lawsuits. You cannot be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent has made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. [*Laughter*] I made my choice: I will continue to push Congress for reform to end the junk lawsuits.

In order to make sure that Americans can find work not only this year but in the coming years, we must make sure Americans have affordable health care. And that means giving people better access to association health plans and giving Americans more control over their health care through tax-free health accounts. It means making sure that the customer is in charge of health decisions, not the Federal Government. And to make sure the healers are able to do their work and people can afford health care, we must have medical liability reform at the Federal level.

Listen, to make sure we continue to grow our economy and people can find work, we need an energy policy. I submitted a plan to the United States Congress 2 years ago. It's a plan that modernizes our electricity system. It's a plan that encourages alternative sources of energy. It is a plan that encourages conservation. But it's also a plan that recognizes we can explore for energy in environmentally friendly ways. For the sake of national security, we need to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

I suspect we may have some farmers here. This farm economy is strong in Wisconsin. And that's good news, and one of the reasons why is because we're selling farm products all around the world. You see, the job of the President is to open up markets. We need a level playing field when it comes to trade. This country can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere with free trade and fair trade, and that's exactly how I will continue to lead.

I've got a plan to make sure this economy continues to grow so America is stronger. It's a plan that understands the role of Government is not to create wealth but to create an environment where the small-business owner can flourish, where the farmer and rancher can make a living. My plan is pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business, pro-farmer. Give me 4 more years, and this economy will continue to grow.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. America's future also depends on our willingness to lead in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists continue to attack in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness or uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

After the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, this Nation resolved and I resolved to bring justice to the terrorists, wherever they dwell. We resolved to hold regimes that hide and sponsor terrorists to account. Afghanistan was a terrorist state, a training camp for Al Qaida killers. Because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy, is an ally in the war on terror. And because we acted, now young girls go to school for the first time in their lives.

Iraq, only last year, was controlled by a dictator who threatened the civilized world, a dictator who had used weapons of mass destruction against his own people. For decades, he tormented and tortured the people of Iraq. Because we acted, Iraq is a free and sovereign nation. Because we acted, its dictator now sits in a prison cell and will receive the justice he denied so many for so long.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson I will never forget and a lesson this country must never forget. America must confront threats before they fully materialize. I remembered that lesson. I remembered the past behavior of Saddam Hussein, and my administration looked at the intelligence and we saw a threat. The United States Congress, including members of both political parties, looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. The previous administration and the Congress looked at the same intelligence and

made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country.

In 2002, I went to the United Nations. And after deliberation, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. And as he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein made the choice. He refused to comply. The free world had spoken, and he refused to comply with the request of the free world. Knowing what I knew about him, remembering the lessons of September the 11th, I had a choice to make: Either to trust a madman or to defend the United States of America. And given that choice, I will defend our country every time.

Although we have not found stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, I believe we were right to go into Iraq and America is safer for it. We removed a declared enemy of America who had the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction and could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

We still have important work to do in that country. We've got hard work to do. Our immediate task in places like Iraq and Afghanistan is to capture or kill the terrorists and foreign fighters. See, you can't talk sense into the terrorists. You can't negotiate with the terrorists. You cannot sit back and hope for the best. We must stay on the offensive. We will engage the enemies in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

Listen, there's no such thing as perfect security in America. The threats are real to the homeland. We know the terrorists want to strike us. They want to spread fear and disrupt our way of life. We've reorganized our Government to better protect the homeland. You just need to know there are a lot of really good people at the Federal level, at the State level, and at the local level doing everything possible to protect our fellow citizens. And I know I speak for everyone here when I say thanks to the police and the firefighters and the emergency teams of the great State of Wisconsin.

We'll defend our homeland; we'll be relentless in our pursuit of the terrorists abroad. Yet in the long run, our safety requires something more. We must work to change the conditions that give rise to terror in the Middle East, the poverty and the hopelessness and the resentments that terrorists can exploit. Life in that region will be far more hopeful and peaceful when men and women can choose their own leaders and the people can decide their own future.

By serving the ideal of liberty, by standing true to our beliefs, we're bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we also serve the deepest ideals of our country. We understand that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

America is leading the world, and the world is changing because of our leadership. Just 3 years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. And now, there's a democracy rising in that troubled part of the world, and America is safer for it. Three years ago, Pakistan was a safe transit point for terrorists on missions of murder and terror. Now, the Pakistan Government has joined us in the war on terror, and Pakistan forces are rounding up the terrorists, and America is safer for it. Three years ago, in Saudi Arabia, terrorists found little opposition. Now, the Saudi Government has joined the war on terror, and they're bringing to justice Al Qaida terrorists, and America is safer for it. Three years ago, Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Now, thousands of Libya's chemical munitions have been destroyed. Libya has given up nuclear processing equipment, and the American people are safer for it. The world is changing for the better. Three years ago, the dictator in Iraq had the capability of producing weapons of mass murder. And now, that dictator faces justice, and the American people are safer for it.

We will finish the work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq. A free society in Afghanistan and Iraq makes America more secure. Free societies are peaceful societies. And the good people in those countries are standing up for a free society. They have got good, strong leadership now. You see, these people want to be free. And therefore, the security forces in Iraq, made up of Iraqis,

are now going after the terrorists that are trying to stop the advance of freedom. And the peoples in those countries can count on America. We promised to help deliver them from tyranny, to restore their sovereignty, and to set them on the path to democracy. And when America gives its word, America keeps its word.

Our men and women in the military are keeping America's commitment, and they're taking great risks on our behalf. At bases around our country and the world, I've had the privilege of meeting those who defend our country and sacrifice for our security. I recently met with Rita and Ken Jerabek. Their son, Ryan, died in service to our country. They died so America would be more secure. I told the Jerabeks the best way to honor the memory of their great son, Ryan, was to complete the mission. A free society in Iraq will make the world a better place. I'm honored that Rita and Ken are with us tonight. God bless them.

When we put our troops in harm's way, it's important they have the very best we can give them. We owe it to our troops, and we owe it to their loved ones. Last September, I proposed supplemental funding to support our military in its mission. The legislation provided funding for body armor and vital equipment, for hazard pay, for health benefits, ammunition, and fuel, and spare parts. In the Senate, only a small, out-of-the-mainstream minority voted against that legislation. Two of those twelve Senators are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Senator Kerry tried to explain his vote by saying this: "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] End quote. Now he is offering a different explanation. Earlier this week, he said he was proud that he and his runningmate voted against the funding for the troops. Now listen, he's——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's entitled to his view. But Members of Congress should not vote to send troops into battle and then vote against funding them. I will continue to stand with our troops and make sure they have what they need in order to complete the mission. As Commander in Chief, I am proud to lead a great military full of decent and honorable citizens.

America is leading the world with confidence and moral clarity. We put together a strong coalition to help us defeat terror. There's over 60 nations involved with the Proliferation Security Initiative; nearly 40 nations are involved in Afghanistan; over 30 nations involved in Iraq. And I appreciate the contributions from those countries. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of foreign countries.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. This Nation is prosperous and strong. Yet, we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the character of our citizens. The other day, my opponent said that a bunch of entertainers from Hollywood conveyed the heart and soul of America.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I believe the heart and soul of America is found in places like Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Our Nation is strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We are strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, our families and our schools and our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for high standards in our public schools, local control of our public schools, accountability in our public schools so no child is left behind in America. We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We stand for a culture of life in which every person counts and every person matters. We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law instead of legislating from the bench.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. The culture of this country is

changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, just go ahead and do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in your community, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period where the stakes are high, where the challenges are difficult, a time when firm resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. Workers in hardhats chanted, "Whatever it takes." A fireman or a policeman—I don't know which one—grabbed me and said, "Do not let me down." As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of our country, whatever it takes.

In these times, I've also been witness to the character of our Nation. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. And we've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most. We will need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every corner of our country. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our blessed land, the best days lie ahead.

Thanks for coming. May God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:17 p.m. in the Resch Center at the Brown County Veterans Memorial Complex. In his remarks, he referred to comedian Dennis Miller; entertainer Wayne Newton; and Brian Noble, head coach, arenafootball2's Green Bay Blizzard.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

July 14, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2005 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor. In addition, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2004 language proposal for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Overall, the discretionary budget authority proposed in my FY 2005 budget would not be increased by these requests.

The details of these proposals are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 15.

Remarks on Signing the Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act

July 15, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. Welcome to the White House.

[*At this point, the lights in the room flickered.*]

The President. Thanks for coming. [*Laughter*] Welcome to the White House. [*Laughter*]

We're taking an important step today to combat the problem of identity theft, one of

the fastest growing financial crimes in our Nation. Last year alone, nearly 10 million Americans had their identities stolen by criminals who robbed them and the Nation's businesses of nearly $50 billion through fraudulent transactions. The bill I'm about to sign sends a clear message that a person who violates another's financial privacy will be punished.

The Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act also prescribes prison sentences for those who use identity theft to commit other crimes, including terrorism. It reflects our Government's resolve to answer serious offenses with serious penalties.

I appreciate the members of my administration who worked on this important piece of legislation, particularly Cabinet members John Snow and John Ashcroft. I appreciate the Members of the Congress who worked hard on this legislation: Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Jon Kyl, Senator Dianne Feinstein; and Members of the House, Chairman Senator Jim Sensenbrenner and John Carter from the great State of Texas. I want to thank the other Members of Congress who are here, members of both political parties. Thank you for coming. I thank those who are on their staffs who have worked hard.

The crime of identity theft undermines the basic trust on which our economy depends. When a person takes out an insurance policy or makes an online purchase or opens a savings account, he or she must have confidence that personal financial information will be protected and treated with care. Identity theft harms not only its direct victims but also many businesses and customers whose confidence is shaken. Like other forms of stealing, identity theft leaves the victim poor and feeling terribly violated.

But the losses are not measured only in dollars. An identity theft—thief can steal the victim's financial reputation. Running up bills on credit card accounts that the victim never knew existed, the criminal can quickly damage a person's lifelong efforts to build and maintain a good credit rating. Repairing the damage can take months or years.

Government has a responsibility to protect citizens from these crimes and the grief and hassle they cause. It's a solemn responsibility of our Government. I want to thank the Members of Congress for recognizing that responsibility.

This good law is part of a broader effort we've waged in recent years. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the FBI, and Secret Service are working with local and State officials to crack down on the criminal networks that are responsible for much of the identity theft that occurs in this Nation. The Federal Trade Commission is training local law enforcement in the detection of identity theft. The Commission has set up the ID Theft Data Clearinghouse, which keeps track of complaints across the country and provides those records to prosecutors seeking to take down organized rings.

Last December, I signed the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, which established a national system of fraud detection so that identity thieves can be stopped before they run up tens of thousands of dollars in illegal purchases. Thanks to this law, victims can make one phone call to alert all three major credit rating agencies to report the crime and to protect their credit ratings.

The law I sign today will dramatically strengthen the fight against identity theft and fraud. Prosecutors across the country report that sentences for these crimes do not reflect the damage done to the victim. Too often, those convicted have been sentenced to little or no time in prison. This changes today. This new law establishes in the Federal criminal court the offense of aggravated identity theft. And someone convicted of that crime can expect to go to jail for stealing a person's good name.

These punishments will come on top of any punishment for crimes that proceed from identity theft. For example, when someone is convicted of mail fraud in a case involving stolen personal information, judges will now impose two sentences, one for mail fraud and one for aggravated identity theft. Those convicted of aggravated identity theft must serve an additional mandatory 2-year prison term. Someone convicted of aggravated identity theft, such as using a false passport in connection with a terrorism case, would receive an additional prison sentence of 5 years. In addition, judges will not be allowed to let those convicted of aggravated identity theft serve their sentence on probation.

This law also raises the standard of conduct for people who have access to personal records through their work at banks, government agencies, insurance companies, and other storehouses of financial data. The law directs the United States Sentencing Commission to make sure those convicted of abusing and stealing from their customers serve a sentence equal to their crimes.

What I'm telling you is, this is a good law. And I appreciate you working hard to see to it that it made it to my desk. Because of this act of Congress I sign today, the guilty will be certain to be punished. That's good for our consumers. It's good for our economy. And it's good for the cause of justice.

Welcome to the White House.

[*The President signed the bill.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:52 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. H.R. 1731, approved July 15, was assigned Public Law 108–275.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and Mongolia

July 15, 2004

President Bush and President Bagabandi today declared a new era of cooperation and comprehensive partnership between their two democratic countries based on shared values and common strategic interests. They welcomed the progress in implementing the Joint Statement of January 31, 2004 and looked ahead to future consultations and collaboration. The two sides agreed to work towards maintaining regular consultations at all levels. They also expressed satisfaction that the relationship between their two countries continues to grow and strengthen. President Bagabandi's visit illustrates the important progress we have made in our bilateral relationship and in our mutual participation in the larger community of democracies.

The United States welcomed the recent free and fair elections in Mongolia as another manifestation of Mongolia's strong and abiding commitment to democracy.

President Bush expressed the United States' strong support for Mongolia's democratic and economic transition and reforms and welcomed Mongolia's progress toward becoming a mature and stable democracy and a private sector-led free market economy. He congratulated President Bagabandi and the Mongolian people for qualifying for eligibility for the Millennium Challenge Account, a new approach to achieving sustainable economic growth that rewards countries for past performance and provides incentives for continuing dynamic policy reforms. President Bush congratulated the Mongolian people on their commitment to democracy as expressed in their recent elections and noted confidence that the election process would be successfully completed in a free, fair and transparent manner consistent with Mongolia's constitution.

The two Presidents agreed that a democratic, secure, and prosperous Mongolia that promotes friendly relations with its neighbors and is an active participant in regional and international economic, political, and security forums is essential to ensuring peace and stability in Asia. The United States supports Mongolia's efforts to integrate itself into regional and international economic and financial structures.

President Bush and President Bagabandi also noted their common support for the permanent, thorough, and transparent dismantlement of nuclear programs on the Korean Peninsula. The United States acknowledges Mongolia's efforts to gain internationally recognized and legally binding nuclear weapon-free status to further enhance confidence-building measures in North East Asia.

President Bush welcomed Mongolia's commitment to combat international terrorism and applauded Mongolia's participation in the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, including its peacekeeping commitment to the Multinational Force in Iraq. The United States and Mongolia agreed to continue working to advance Mongolia's contribution to international peacekeeping efforts. President Bush reaffirmed the U.S. willingness to continue bilateral programs of technical assistance consistent with Mongolia's long-term developmental goals. President Bagabandi expressed Mongolia's deep appreciation to the United

States for its long-term support and economic assistance. The two Presidents agreed that the establishment of a free, democratic Iraq is important to democracy, peace and stability in the Middle East and the United Nations should play a leading role in the process.

The two Presidents agreed to actively promote bilateral trade and investment and noted signing of the United States-Mongolia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement during President Bagabandi's visit. The Presidents expressed the hope that this would lead in due course to a closer bilateral economic and trade relationship.

The two Presidents recognized that a U.S.-Mongolia relationship based on mutual respect and equitable partnership is in the national interest of both countries. They pledged to deepen and strengthen this important relationship and to work together to promote global freedom, peace, democracy and prosperity.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Legislation To Implement the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement

July 15, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents prepared by my Administration to implement the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement (the "Agreement" or the "FTA"). This Agreement enhances our bilateral relationship with a longstanding partner in the North Africa and Middle East region. The Agreement will benefit the people of the United States and Morocco, illustrating to other developing countries the advantages of open markets.

This Agreement is a strong demonstration of my Administration's commitment to opening markets, leveling the playing field, and expanding opportunities for American workers, manufacturers, businesses, farmers, and consumers. In negotiating this Agreement, my Administration was guided by the negotiating objectives set out in the Trade Act of 2002. The Agreement will expand Morocco's market for U.S. manufactured goods, agricultural products, services, and investment. As soon as this Agreement enters into force, tariffs will be eliminated on virtually all manufactured goods traded between our countries.

The Agreement provides U.S. producers of beef, poultry, wheat, corn, soybeans, and other agriculture products with increased access to Morocco's market, while complementing Morocco's agriculture reform program. In addition, the Agreement provides the opportunity for U.S. producers to adjust to increased imports from Morocco, if necessary.

New opportunities for U.S. services firms will be opened, U.S. investment will be protected, and U.S. companies will be able to participate in government procurement opportunities on the same basis as Moroccan firms. This Agreement has some of the strongest intellectual property protections ever contained in a U.S. trade agreement with a developing country.

The United States and Morocco have agreed to cooperate on environment and labor issues and to establish mechanisms supporting those efforts. Negotiation of this Agreement has promoted adoption of a new labor law in Morocco. This Agreement has also helped lead to improved domestic environmental laws in Morocco, and a number of additional cooperative projects have been identified for future work.

The approval of this Agreement will be another important step in implementing our plan for a broader Middle East Free Trade Area. Indeed, this Agreement offers the United States an opportunity to encourage economic reform in a moderate Muslim nation, as we have done with the Jordan FTA and the recently concluded Bahrain FTA. Leaders in Morocco support a reformist and tolerant vision that includes free parliamentary elections, the sale of state-owned businesses, the encouragement of foreign investment that can be connected to broad-based development, and better protection of the rights of women and workers. It is strongly in the interests of the United States to embrace these reforms and do what we can to

encourage them. Passing this Agreement is a critical step in that direction.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 15, 2004.

Remarks at the National Training Conference on Human Trafficking in Tampa, Florida

July 16, 2004

Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks a lot, John, for your service and your kind introduction.

It's always good to be with Jeb. [*Laughter*] He's a great brother and a fine Governor. And I know my daughter Barbara, who is traveling with me today, is proud of her Uncle Jeb. Thanks for coming, Barbara. We're glad you're here.

I appreciate you inviting me to this important conference. Human trafficking is one of the worst offenses against human dignity. Our Nation is determined—determined—to fight that crime abroad and at home. And that's what we're here to talk about today. I am especially pleased that Jeb has today signed into law a bill making the sexual trafficking of minors a felony in the State of Florida. I appreciate his leadership.

I want to thank Claude Allen, the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, for joining us today. Hey, Claude. Thank you for coming. Paula Dobriansky, who is the Under Secretary of the Department of State—thank you, Paula, for your dedicated service. Asa Hutchinson is the Under Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security—thanks.

In order to make sure the Federal laws we're going to discuss are enforced, you've got to have good, strong U.S. attorneys around the United States. Paul Perez is a strong U.S. attorney here in Tampa. Paul, thank you for being here. I appreciate your coming.

I want to thank all the State and local folks who are here, the local officials and the local law enforcement officials. I appreciate the faith-based and community organizations who are here. Thanks for your compassion and your love.

I met Lan Pham today when I got to the airport. Where are you, Lan? Oh, there she is. You'd have thought you'd have got a better seat than that. But there she is. [*Laughter*]

The reason why Lan came out to greet me at Air Force One is she volunteers 5 days a week at Catholic Charities. She is a soldier in the Army of Compassion. She is a reminder that the greatest strength of this country is the heart and souls of our fellow citizens, people who are willing to help people who hurt. Lan is such an example. She is involved with the rescuing of innocent victims that have been brought here and have been harmed. You know, the great strength of America is the fact that we've got millions of our fellow citizens who heed a call to love their neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves—on an hourly basis—and Lan is such a person.

I am honored to be with the courageous men and women who are serving on the frontlines in the fight against human trafficking. You've got a tough job, but it's a necessary job. You're hunting down the traffickers. You're serving justice by putting them behind bars. You're liberating captives, and you're helping them recover from years of abuse and trauma. The lives of tens of thousands of innocent women and children depend on your compassion. They depend upon your determination, and they depend upon your daily efforts to rescue them from misery and servitude. You are in a fight against evil, and the American people are grateful for your dedication and service.

Human life is the gift of our Creator, and it should never be for sale. It takes a special kind of depravity to exploit and hurt the most vulnerable members of society. Human traffickers rob children of their innocence; they expose them to the worst of life before they have seen much of life. Traffickers tear families apart. They treat their victims as nothing more than goods and commodities for sale to the highest bidder.

Worldwide, at least 600,000 to 800,000 human beings are trafficked across international borders each year. Of those, it is believed that 80 percent are women and girls and that 70 percent of them were forced into

sexual servitude. The United Nations believes that the trafficking of human beings is now the third largest source of money for organized crime, after arms and drugs. We've got a problem; we need to do something about it.

The American Government has a particular duty, because human trafficking is an affront to the defining promise of our country. People come to America hoping for a better life. It is a terrible tragedy when anyone comes here only to be forced into a sweatshop, domestic servitude, pornography, or prostitution. It is estimated that between 14,500 and 17,500 victims of trafficking cross our borders every year. U.S. law enforcement has documented cases of Latvian girls trafficked into sexual slavery in Chicago; or Ukrainian girls trafficked in Los Angeles and Maryland; or Thai, Korean, Malaysian, and Vietnamese girls trafficked in Georgia; or Mexican girls trafficked in California, New Jersey, and here in Florida. Many of the victims are teenagers, some as young as 12 years old. Many victims are beaten. Some are killed. Others die spiritual and emotional deaths, convinced after years of abuse that their lives have no worth. This trade in human beings brings suffering to the innocent and shame to our country, and we will lead the fight against it.

Last year, at the United Nations, I called on other governments to pass laws making such abuse a crime. And many have risen to the challenge. In the past year, 24 nations have enacted new laws to combat trade in human lives. Thirty two are now in the process of drafting or passing such laws. As a result of these efforts, this year nearly 8,000 traffickers were prosecuted worldwide; 2,800 have been convicted.

America is actively helping nations that are willing to engage in this fight. Since taking office, my administration has provided more than $295 million to support antitrafficking programs in more than 120 countries. We're taking the lead. We are helping other governments to develop laws to combat abuse, to create special law enforcement units to investigate trafficking cases and to rescue victims. We're helping them build emergency shelters and develop long-term rehabilitation and vocational training programs.

At the U.N. last year, I pledged $50 million to support these efforts in the year 2004. Today the Department of State has announced it has identified the final $25 million to meet that pledge, funds that will support antitrafficking programs in Brazil and Cambodia and India and Indonesia and Mexico, Moldova, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania. Every nation that fights human trafficking has a friend in the United States. And it's important for them to know that.

America is also confronting nations that profit from or tolerate human trafficking. We are helping nations, and we are confronting nations. Those countries face potential sanctions that include the loss of U.S. military and economic assistance as well as the loss of support from the World Bank and the IMF. And this approach is yielding results.

Last year, after the Department of State released the 2003 Trafficking in Persons Report, 10 nations avoided sanctions by moving quickly to pass new antitrafficking legislation, to train police officers. They launched domestic information campaigns and established victim protection programs. This year, we have created a Special Watch List of 42 problem countries that require scrutiny. Every nation that is complicit in human trafficking can know that the United States Government is watching, and there will be consequences if they don't act.

As we fight the trade in human beings abroad, we have also launched an unprecedented domestic effort to deal with this problem at home. Our approach combines aggressive law enforcement action—that means putting people in jail—with compassionate outreach to the victims. Over the past 3 years, we have more than doubled the number of new trafficking investigations underway. Last August, for example, a Federal District Court in New Jersey sentenced 2 women to 17½ years in prison, the maximum time allowable, for bringing 4 Mexican girls into the United States and forcing them into prostitution in Plainfield, New Jersey—17½ years of hard time. The message to traffickers is becoming clear: If we catch you, you're going to spend time in jail.

This year, the Department of Justice, under General Ashcroft's lead, successfully prosecuted the largest human trafficking case

in U.S. history, convicting the ringleader of a criminal gang that had smuggled more than 200 Vietnamese and Chinese nationals to work as slave laborers in a garment factory on American Samoa.

Since 2001, we've charged 110 traffickers. That's triple the number charged in the previous 3 years. We're beginning to make good, substantial progress. The message is getting out: We're serious, and when we catch you, you'll find out we're serious. We're staying on the hunt.

We're also taking unprecedented action to help the victims, and that's a really important part of the strategy. One of the ways traffickers keep women and girls enslaved is by telling them they will be arrested and deported if they try to run away. We're removing that tool of coercion by treating the victims of trafficking not as illegal aliens but as refugees. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act carried a special class of visas called T-Visas that allowed trafficking victims to remain in the United States and receive the same services and counseling that are provided to refugees.

Often, these women have been terribly brutalized. And when they escape from their nightmare, they should find the protection and generous heart of America. So we're calling upon and rallying the armies of compassion in our society to help. Since taking office, this administration has provided $35 million in grants to 36 local groups that are helping those who have suffered at the hands of traffickers. We're using Federal monies to help spread compassion.

Today, the Justice Department is awarding 4.5 million to 9 organizations that are running shelters where victims can take refuge while they seek further help. This is a good and proper use of Federal taxpayers' money. Earlier this year, the Department of Health and Human Services helped Covenant House establish a nationwide, toll-free, 24-hour hotline to report incidents of trafficking. Victims and those who know about their plight can call 1–888–373–7888. Spread the word. One speech alone is not going to get the number out. [*Laughter*]

America will not tolerate slave traders who bring women and children into our country for abuse. We will not tolerate American citizens abusing innocent children abroad. Sex tourism is an estimated billion-dollar-a-year business worldwide. No American should have any part of it. We're working with governments in Southeast Asia to crack down on pedophile sex tourism. And many nations in that region have made substantial progress.

We also face a problem only 90 miles off our shores, where the regime of Fidel Castro has turned Cuba into a major destination for sex tourism. A recent study by the Protection Project at Johns Hopkins University found that Cuba has, quote, "replaced Southeast Asia as a destination for pedophiles and sex tourists." As restrictions on travel to Cuba were eased during the 1990s, the study found an influx of American and Canadian tourists contributed to a sharp increase in child prostitution in Cuba.

The regime in Havana, already one of the worst violators of human rights in the world, is adding to its crimes. The dictator welcomes sex tourism. Here's how he bragged about their industry: "Cuba has the cleanest"—this is his quotes—"Cuba has the cleanest and most educated prostitutes in the world." He said that because sex tourism is a vital source of hard currency to keep his corrupt government afloat. My administration is working toward a comprehensive solution to this problem: The rapid, peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. We have put a strategy in place to hasten the day when no Cuban child is exploited to finance a failed revolution and every Cuban citizen will live in freedom.

We have taken action to stop American tourists from participating in the sexual abuse of children in Cuba or anywhere else in the world. In 2003, I signed the Protect Act, which allows U.S. law enforcement to prosecute Americans who travel abroad and engage in sex with minors without having to prove prior intent. The Protect Act expands the statute of limitations to the life of the victim for crimes involving the abduction and physical or sexual abuse of children in virtually all cases. The Protect Act imposes strict new penalties, doubling the maximum sentence for U.S. citizens who travel to foreign countries to sexually abuse children. We've also launched information campaigns in foreign countries to inform American travelers

of penalties back home for sexually exploiting children abroad.

See, stopping this abuse requires going after the criminal gangs who supply the sexual predators. But we cannot put them out of business until and unless we deal with the problem of demand. And so that's why we are going after the unscrupulous adults who prey on the young and the innocent. Last summer, the Department of Homeland Security launched Operation Predator, a comprehensive effort to protect children from international sex tourists and traffickers and pornography and prostitution rings. That's why Asa Hutchinson is here. This operation has resulted in more than 3,200 arrests nationwide.

I appreciate the good work of all the men and women at every level of government who are working hard to protect women and children and bringing the predators to justice. I told you earlier, it takes hard work. I know it does. There's a lot of people working long hours to enforce the law and therefore make our society a more compassionate place.

All the steps I've outlined today are important, yet the success will depend on the courage of those individuals, people like Anna Rodriguez. Where are you, Anna? Yes, thanks for coming. She is a victim advocate. I think some of you might have met her earlier today. A few years ago, Anna was working for the Collier County Sheriffs Department when she was called to what appeared to be a routine domestic violence call. Upon arriving at the scene, she noticed a 19-year-old woman named Maria crying quietly in the corner of the apartment. After some coaxing, Maria told Anna Rodriguez her story.

She had been kidnaped from her family in Guatemala. She had been smuggled into the United States. She was being kept as a slave. She was forced to work without pay in the tomato fields of central Florida and then raped at night.

At first, Anna was told by her superiors there was nothing she could do for Maria except turn her case over to the INS. She didn't give up. Anna Rodriguez obviously has a huge heart. Thanks to her persistence, Maria was rescued and her captor is now in prison.

See, Maria became the first adult recipient of the new T-Visa created under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Because of good law passed, she remains in the U.S. and is working to rebuild her life with the continuing support of her friend Anna Rodriguez.

I hope out of this conference comes a determination to stand behind the Anna Rodriguezes and the thousands of other dedicated police officers, prosecutors, social workers, local officials who stand on the—side by side with the victims of human trafficking every single day, who want to rescue them in the name of a compassionate America.

We're working to make sure you have the support you need in Washington, DC—you've got a Governor who's supporting you here in Florida—because of the struggle against human trafficking is more than a fight against crime, see. This is more than a criminal justice matter. It's a struggle for the lives and dignity of innocent women and children. And that's why all of us must be dedicated to the strategies that will enable us to prevail.

I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come by and talk about this important subject. Again, I thank you for your work of compassion and decency.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. at the Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General John Ashcroft, who introduced the President; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and President Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Funding for the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction

July 16, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In order to ensure the most effective counter-proliferation capabilities of the United States and respond effectively to the ongoing threat of terrorist activity, I am notifying the Congress of my intent to transfer $10 million from funds provided in Public

Law 107–38, the 2001 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Acts on the United States, to the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (the "Commission").

These funds are necessary to support the essential activities of the Commission in assessing the capabilities and challenges of the intelligence community regarding the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Message to the Senate Transmitting a Protocol Amending the Netherlands-United States Convention on Taxation

July 16, 2004

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification, the Protocol Amending the Convention Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of the Netherlands for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington, D.C., on March 8, 2004. Transmitted for the Senate's information is an exchange of notes with an attached Understanding, which provides clarification with respect to the application of the Convention, as amended, in specific cases. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol.

The Protocol would bring the existing Convention into closer conformity with current U.S. tax treaty policy. As modified by the Protocol, the Convention would be similar to tax treaties between the United States and other developed nations. The Protocol was concluded in recognition of the importance of the United States' economic relations with the Netherlands.

The Protocol would modify the treatment of certain cross-border dividend payments and would modernize the Convention's anti-treaty-shopping provisions. The Protocol also would liberalize provisions in the existing Convention regarding the mutual recognition of each country's pension plans. Other provisions in the Protocol update the Convention to take account of changes in law in the two countries over the last 10 years. The exchange of notes with an attached Understanding provides guidance to taxpayers and each government regarding the intended interpretation of certain provisions of the existing Convention, as amended.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Protocol, and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 16, 2004.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

July 10

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

July 11

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a White House tee-ball game on the South Lawn.

July 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Oak Ridge, TN, where he toured the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with President Elias Antonio Saca of El Salvador.

July 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Marquette, MI, where he began a bus tour. Upon arrival in Marquette, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Grace McCarthy. Later, he traveled to Duluth, MN, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Darren Klemek.

In the evening, the President traveled to Milwaukee, WI.

The President announced his intention to nominate Daniel R. Levinson to be Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to nominate Don T. Riley to be a Commissioner of the Mississippi River Commission and, upon appointment, to designate him as Commission President.

The President announced his intention to appoint David H. Koch as a member of the National Cancer Advisory Board.

July 14

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, continuing his bus tour, he traveled to Waukesha, WI, and later to West Bend, WI.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Fond du Lac, WI, and later to Oshkosh, WI.

In the evening, the President traveled to Ashwaubenon, WI. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his appointment of Walter B. Slocombe as a member of the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction.

July 15

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and met with the National Security Council. Later, he met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and then with the National Infrastructure Advisory Council.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney. He then met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with President Natsagiyn Bagabandi of Mongolia.

Later in the afternoon, in an Oval Office ceremony, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Roberto Abdenur of Brazil, Bernardo Sande of Malawi, Daouda Diabate of Cote d'Ivore, Charles A. Minor of Liberia, Leonard Njogu Ngaithe of Kenya, George a. Obiozor of Nigeria, Tijani Ould Kerim of Mauritania, Kasit Piromya of Thailand, and Gordon Shirley of Jamaica.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of the Presidential delegation to attend the 2004 Olympic games in Athens, Greece: President George Bush (delegation leader); Barbara Bush; Thomas Miller; Barbara P. Bush; Jenna Bush; Chris Evert; Alex Spanos; and Faye Spanos.

July 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Tampa, FL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Lan Pham.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Beckley, WV, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Susan Landis. He then made remarks at a rally. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate B. Lynn Pascoe to be Ambassador to Indonesia.

The President announced his intention to designate Daniel B. Levin as Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his designation of Timothy S. Bitsberger as Acting Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (Financial Markets).

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning July 12 and continuing.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted July 12

James Ballinger,
of Arizona, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2010, vice Cleo Parker Robinson, term expiring.

Ruben Castillo,
of Illinois, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2009 (reappointment).

George Perdue,
of Georgia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation for a term expiring November 5, 2006, vice Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., term expired.

Terence Alan Teachout,
of New York, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2010, vice Gordon Davidson, term expiring.

Withdrawn July 12

James M. Strock,
of California, to be a Member of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2006, vice Penne Percy Korth, term expired, which was sent to the Senate on November 21, 2003.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released July 9

Advance text of the President's remarks at a rally in York, PA *

Released July 11

Fact sheet: White House South Lawn Tee-Ball

Released July 12

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Released July 13

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4103

Released July 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1731

Released July 16

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Jersey

Fact sheet: Human Trafficking: A Modern Form of Slavery

Acts Approved by the President

Approved July 13

H.R. 4103 / Public Law 108–274
AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004

Approved July 15

H.R. 1731 / Public Law 108–275
Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act

* This release was not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.

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